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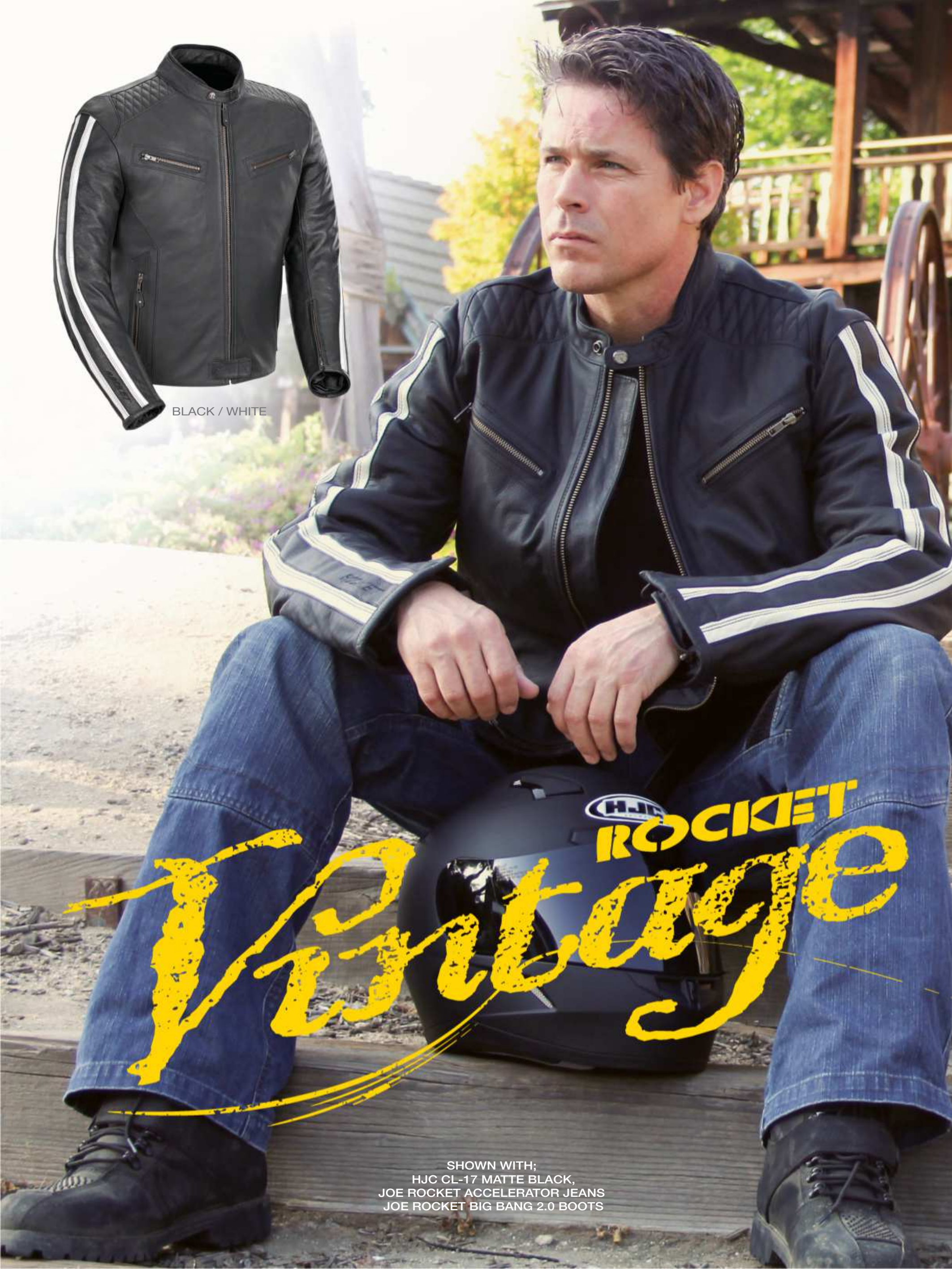
- BROOKLANDS RACER: SUPERCHARGED 1937 TRIUMPH SPEED TWIN
- THE LONG WAY, 1957: AROUND THE WORLD ON DUCATI 175 SINGLES
- COMING OF AGE: DUCATI M900 MONSTER TURNS 25
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ARMOR

This supercharged Triumph Speed Twin set the Brooklands lap record in 1937. Page 26.



PHILLIP TOOTH

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ON THE WEB!

Triumph starters

Working with students in the College of Engineering at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont, The Classic Bike Experience, also in Burlington, designed and put into production an air-actuated starter assist for 1971-1979 oil-in-frame Triumph twins. Pre-OIF units are now in the prototyping phase, and we plan to install one on a 1970 Bonneville in a future issue. Read the fascinating story of how CBE teamed with students to create the KickMagic starter assist for Triumphs by going to MotorcycleClassics.com/kickmagic





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Learning curves

There was a time when I thought I was getting pretty good at wrenching. Pull apart a Norton? No problem. After you get a couple under your belt, they're pretty easy to work on. Ditto old BMW airheads, which, while technically more complex than a Norton, are basically tractors on two wheels; understressed and overbuilt. But if the rehab on my 1983 Laverda RGS 1000 has taught me anything, it's that I still have a long way to go to be any good at this mechanicing thing.

Two years ago, riding home from the 2016 Barber Vintage Festival, the RGS developed an oil leak, which, as these things go, turned into an engine-out, full top-end rebuild, with new pistons, rings, valves, valve springs, valve guides; the lot. With the engine out, I decided to strip the frame, welding in some strengthening gussets and the stop lug for the sidestand that broke off long before I owned it, followed by repainting it and attending to all the other stuff that follows a "simple" rebuild. As it went back together I replaced all the wheel bearings, steering head bearings and swingarm bearings. I also decided to tidy up the wiring harness, replacing some of the 35-year-old connectors that were threatening to separate from the wiring loom. That meant getting a crimping tool for uninsulated connectors, because there was no way I was going to use the plastic-covered, color-coded crimp connectors you buy at AutoZone. I mean, it's a Laverda, right? It'd be like painting a mustache on the Mona Lisa.

That meant sourcing a selection of needed connectors, but finding the right connectors turned out to be a challenge, because they weren't even in the catalog at any of my local auto parts stores. Relieved to find them readily available on eBay and Amazon, I quickly discovered that the cheap connectors that proliferate in the online marketplace are cheap for a reason: Spade and bullet connectors that cost \$2.50 a hundred pack work once, and only once. They'll connect right up, but don't ever pull them back apart, because they'll never grip tight again. The good stuff's out there, but you have to search for it, because it's being sold by smaller operations that actually care about quality and thoughtfully source their products, not the mega marketers that are just trying to turn as much revenue as possible. Gee, there's a surprise.

And of course I did a thorough rebuild on the trio of PHF32 Dell'Orto carburetors, which was another learning curve. I've rebuilt dozens of British Amal carbs, more than a few round-slide Mikunis and constant-vacuum Keihins, and a few Bings, but never a set of Dell'Ortos, and without the help of the folks on laverdaforum.com the rebuild would have taken even longer. They're actually quite straightforward once you get into them, but with no previous experience I took my time stripping them down, jotting down all the jet sizes and locations before cleaning the carb bodies and then giving them a dip in the ultrasonic bath before putting them back together.

And now the RGS is back on the road. It fired up pretty much on the button, and apart from figuring out some minor carburetor issues and having to reroute the rear wiring harness (because apparently I can't decipher my own photographs), I can't believe how nicely it runs. It's lovely. And it's about time.

When I launched into what I hoped would be a minor restoration two years ago, I figured I'd have it back on the road inside of six to eight months: It took almost exactly two years. I guess I can hope that next time, if there is a next time, it'll go faster, because I've already had to go through the learning curve that comes with every new project.

Richard Backus
Editor-in-chief



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“Could you find him a Suzuki RE5 please?”

Tales from the Road

I loved the TWALD article in the July/August issue and think that MC should have a running “Tales of the Road” section in the magazine. Reading interesting stories about barn finds, lost loves and frame-off restorations are great, but rides like TWALD are a huge component of what riding vintage bikes is all about — riding them with your pals. Years back, I dubbed our annual road trip The Oddball Run, a sick play on the Cannonball Run race, so named because “we ride old junk long distances for no reason whatsoever.” While I can’t write about the Oddball due to our

“what goes on the road ...” agreement, I am sure that there are lots of readers like the TWALD riders who can spin up a tale or two. Some may even be partly true. C’mon, give up your Tales of the Road!

Richard S./Birmingham, Alabama

Richard,

Good timing. We’ve just finished up a special Collector Edition, newsstand-only issue featuring a collection of motorcycle travel articles, and it’s called Tales from the Road. Check it out on your local newsstand, or get it on our website at motorcycleclassics.com/store/product/motorcycle-classics-theses-from-the-road — Ed.

Great story

Where has Anders Carlson been hiding his story telling skills? His writing has to be some of the most refreshing prose I have had the pleasure to read in a motorcycle magazine. Hire him! Give him more crazy bikes to salvage, and race. I so enjoyed his struggle with the H1. It mirrored my love/hate relationship with my H2 (mostly a kind of terrified love) The story he wrote was an absolute cracker to read. Could you find him a Suzuki RE5 rotary please? That bike needs to be acknowledged as the machine that very nearly sent Suzuki to the wall, so I’m sure it could do similar

RIDERS

Rider: Lee Buffenmyer, Lititz, Pennsylvania

Age: 67

Occupation: Offset pressman (retired)

Rides: Lee has four street-legal bikes in his 20-strong collection, including a 1970 Suzuki TC90, a 1976 Suzuki Gopher, a 1975 Penton Enduro 100 and his Penton café racer.

Lee’s story: The 1985 Hillclimb Amateur National Champion, Lee Buffenmyer raced for 18 years, many of those aboard a Penton, his favorite make. We bumped into Lee at this year’s Vintage Motorcycle Days, and asked him to tell us about his café’d Penton, something we’d never seen anyone do.

“This started out as a 1973 Penton 125cc Six-Day enduro. I bought it as a rolling chassis in really sad shape, but it had a

title. I wanted something I could ride on the road. My thought was, what if John Penton would have made a café racer, what would it look like? I had these ideas in my head about what I wanted to do, so I made drawings and started collecting parts.

“I tried to use as many original components as I could. The wheels and hubs are stock, and the gas tank was an original Penton accessory. The front suspension is stock. It originally came with a 21-inch front wheel, so to lower it down I got an 18-inch wheel and new spokes from Buchanan’s, and I pulled the fork tubes up through the yoke and put clip-ons on the top. The Ceriani front end is stock. The fork brace came from a 1972 Penton, but I incorporated a fender bracket into it. The frame is stock, except I cut the rear loop off and cut some tabs off to clean it up. The speedometer is stock, I got it new out

of Germany on eBay, and I made a bracket for the speedometer and bolted it to where the stock handlebars would have been. A friend of mine made up the tail section and I made up the side panels. The top end of the engine came from one of my hill climb bikes. I rebuilt the Sachs engine and polished the cases, they were sandcast and painted originally.

“The downpipe was made by Penton for their motocross bikes and they’re rare. I found it on eBay and nobody knew what it was, it was brand-new! I used one on my hill climb bike and it made more power than the stock up pipe. It probably puts out about 25 horsepower. It’s street legal, and it rides really well, and I like to think it looks right for a Penton.”



Lee Buffenmyer and his custom-built Penton café racer at Vintage Motorcycle Days 2018.

"It was a great bike, with an exhaust note to match."

things to Anders' mental state as well. The resulting article I'm sure would be gold.

I had an RE5 in 1974 through to the end of 1975 and it was the most perplexing bike to tune and get running smoothly, but when it was good, it was a joy. Just to twist that throttle and feel the linear power and hear the awesome exhaust — which sounded like nothing else on the road — was an unforgettable experience. The exhaust gas was insanely hot. I can remember that very clearly, along with the strange cylindrical instrument binnacle. Are there many around now? I'd imagine they are quite a collectable.

Finally, I totally share your enjoyment of the Stinger. I had one almost 50 years ago and thoroughly enjoyed its fun nature. Brilliant for getting around without a care in the world.

Keep up the good work, and promise me an RE5 story soon.

Mark Bennett/via email

BMW rider

Congratulations on an exceptionally



good issue. A really interesting and diverse range of bikes to read about. I quite enjoyed Anders Carlson's tale of the H1. His writing style reminded me of *Real Classic's* Frank Westworth, down to earth and open about his human foibles. Please pass on my regards to Anders if you get the chance. I ride a 1974 BMW R90/6 fitted with Siebenrock 1,000cc barrels plus twin plugging. A grunty smooth ride, plus also a 1952 Matchless G80S for more sedate rides.

Richard Gielingh/Queensland, Australia

More Idiot

The Widowmaker and the Idiot by Anders Carlson (September/October 2018) is a gem. Carlson's prose elevates the kind of two-steps-forward-one-step-back fooling around with old motorcycles we love to a rare level. Reading him is almost as good as doing it oneself. Get him a new bike and let him run with it every issue!

Ben English/Albany, New York

Agony

The article regarding the agony and the ecstasy of campaigning the Kawi 500 triple by Anders Carlson was extremely well written! I enjoyed every word.

Cam Norris/via email

Cleaning gas tanks

In the September/October issue, you gave instructions on cleaning gas tanks, but there is a not-too-expensive way to do an even better job, and it doesn't

involve any harmful acid or other harmful chemicals.

First, as your article says, drain the contents of the tank and dispose of them. Second, to remove any old varnish, pour in enough methyl alcohol to remove the varnish. A gallon should be plenty, and a couple bottles of Heet will usually be enough to do the job, as well. Third, remove the petcocks and make a cover or stopper for the petcock holes. Fourth, obtain a gallon jug of Milkstone Remover. You can get this at Tractor Supply stores or places that cater to farmers who have milk cows or dairies. Milkstone Remover is about 56 percent phosphoric acid, which is in most soft drinks to give the soda some kick. Fill a plastic tote of about 18-gallon size with 8 to 10 gallons of water, and then pour the Milkstone Remover into the water — not the other way around.

Fifth, fill the gas tank completely up to the filler with the mix. Let this sit for about two days and pour it back into the plastic tote. Shake it once in a while, and if the tank still has any hard, deep rust, repeat. This will not harm steel. If you find holes in the tank, they were there before and the MSR just took out the rust. I never coat tanks. I've done this on at least 75 tanks over the years and never had a problem. It will save a lot of headaches for guys that use it. By the way, the mix can be used to remove rust from parts; it lasts almost forever.

Jim Townsend, Director,
Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club of America

Remembering the AJS Model 20

First of all I would like to thank all concerned for continuing to produce such a great magazine. I look forward to picking up my copy of each new issue as it becomes available. There are always interesting bikes featured, but up until the latest issue (September/October), there was always one missing; namely the AJS Model 20 Spring Twin. I grew up in the midlands region of the U.K. during the 1940s and 1950s. During that time a family's main form of transportation, motorized that is, was either a motorbike, or a combination, and there were many marques available back then!

After I started work and had saved up a bit of cash I bought my first bike, about a 1948 350cc Royal Enfield. Once confident with handling it I of course wanted a better bike; therefore it was my pleasure to see and read your article on the Model 20 as that was my next, and last bike, a 1951 model I believe. It was a great bike with an exhaust note to match. I have lived in British Columbia for 40 some years now and the Model 20 that I owned back then is the only one that I have ever seen both in the U.K. and in North America; thanks for bringing one to me if only in pictures. I have attached a picture of me on my Model 20 back in the latter part of the 1950s.

Bob Thacker/British Columbia, Canada

Galluzzi's Big Gamble: 1993-1999 Ducati M900 Monster

Until 1993, streetfighters were the province of impoverished riders who had low-sided their sport bikes and couldn't afford to fix the busted bodywork, so they made a feature of the naked look. Things might have stayed that way without the inspiration of Miguel Angel Galluzzi. The story goes that then Ducati technical director Massimo Bordi challenged Galluzzi to design a new motorcycle that could be extensively customized with factory or aftermarket options. That implied a minimalist machine without bodywork. Bordi also wanted to minimize development costs while avoiding a proliferation of new parts. It's said that Galluzzi already had the solution in mind.

Galluzzi fitted Fabio Taglioni's tried-and-true 904cc air/oil-cooled desmodue (desmodromic valve actuation) engine into a steel-tube trellis frame adapted from the 750/900SS and 888 Superbike, and with the bare minimum of ancillaries. The result was effectively the first factory streetfighter, and it defined the features and aesthetics of a generation of naked bikes. It was instantly named *Il Mostro* (The Monster) by the factory team.

As Ducati's best-selling model ever, the Monster has been described as "the bike that saved Ducati," representing more than 50 percent of the output from Borgo Panigale between 1993 and 2014. The instant success of the Monster no doubt helped make Ducati an attractive buy when Cagiva sold the company to Texas Pacific Group in 1996.

The 1993 Monster's engine came in 900SS tune produc-



ing 73 rear wheel horsepower. The single crankpin, V-twin engine used one belt-driven overhead camshaft per cylinder operating two valves via desmodromic followers. Fueling was courtesy of a pair of 38mm Mikuni BDST CV carburetors, and sparks from an electronically triggered Kokusan ignition system. A gear primary transmitted power to Ducati's familiar dry multiplate clutch and 6-speed gearbox. As an integral part of the triangulated frame, the engine also carried the swingarm pivot in the rear of the transmission case. Said swingarm was fabricated in aluminum, with a rising-rate linkage to a single Sachs-Boge spring/damper unit with preload and rebound adjustment. At the front was the non-adjustable Showa 41mm upside-down fork from the 750SS. The 17-inch Brembo wheels and triple-disc brakes were from the 900SS.

Equipment was intentionally minimalist (the Monster had to wait until 2000 for a tachometer!), with a single circular headlight and bolt-on handlebars. But it did include a removable seat cowl with a vestigial passenger perch underneath.

Alan Cathcart tested one of the first Monsters for *Cycle World* in 1993 (see this issue of *Motorcycle Classics*, Page 62)

ON THE MARKET

1995 Ducati M900 Monster/\$3,059



First-generation M900 Monsters are thin on the ground in the U.S., as few made their way here during the first few years of production. Showing a low 17,861 miles on the clock, this 1995 M900 has the hallmarks of an enthusiast-owned machine, with touches like a Corbin saddle and aftermarket carbon fiber mufflers, although we could do without the yellow wheels. Although no service history is provided, it looks to be in excellent all-around condition and the price is in line with current offerings. That said, Ducati enthusiast Robert Smith offers a few pointers for would-be owners: "1) Look for cracks around the rear swingarm pivot in the back of the transmission case. They've been known to let go. 2) The electrical system on 1990s Ducati 2-valve twins is marginal, especially the regulator/rectifier. Worth checking with a voltmeter that the battery is charging. If not, the reg/rec is likely fried. 3) Look for damage on the bike's left side. The self-retracting kickstand fools lots of new owners, often leading to a driveway drop. There's a later pivot bolt that cures the problem." Contact the seller at cyclewisevt.com

“Front tire flat? No problem! Just wheelie home!”

DUCATI M900 MONSTER

Years produced	1993-1999 (904cc carburetor engine)
Power	73hp (claimed) @ 7,000rpm
Top speed	118mph
Engine	904cc air/oil-cooled SOHC desmodromic 90-degree V-twin
Transmission	6-speed, chain final drive
Weight/MPG	441lb (wet)/40mpg
Price then/now	\$8,950 (1994)/\$3,000-\$6,000

and concluded, “It’s been a long time since I’ve ridden a street bike which so succinctly encapsulated the fun-factor in motorcycling. This is a red-blooded street rod par excellence.” *Rider* magazine’s tester found little to fault except some stiction in the stiff, under-sprung front fork — though that was mitigated by the ease with which the front wheel could be lofted: “Front tire flat? No problem! Just wheelie home!”

The Monster 900 remained essentially unchanged until a Marzocchi 40mm fork with preload and rebound adjustment arrived for 1996. 1997 saw a handlebar fairing fitted and the

engine re-tuned for lower-down torque with smaller valves and reduced compression, giving 67 horsepower. A new model, the 900S with the 73 horsepower engine, arrived in 1998, and the 900, 900S and new “Cromo” were fitted with an adjustable Showa fork. By 1999 these were joined by the Dark, City, and City Dark models with cosmetic variations.

By this time, the Monsters were the only

Ducatis still using carburetors; a new, Pierre Terblanche-styled M900 with fuel injection arrived for 2000.

According to *Motorcycle News*, 300,000 Monsters had been built by 2016. It seems like Galluzzi’s big gamble really paid off! **MC**

CONTENDERS Naked alternatives to Ducati’s M900 Monster

1988-1991 Honda Hawk GT NT650

“The Hawk is the most creative reinterpretation of the standard motorcycle anyone has dared to try, ever,” wrote *Cycle* magazine in its review of the Hawk GT. But was it worthy of sharing the name of Honda’s groundbreaking early twins?

The GT combined a stretched version of the Shadow 500/VT500 Ascot engine with a brand-new alloy perimeter beam chassis and “Pro Arm” RC30-derived single-sided swingarm with chain drive. The liquid-cooled, dual-crankpin 52-degree V-twin used three valves per cylinder feeding a 5-speed transmission by gears.

Like the Monster, bodywork was minimal. But that’s where similarities end. While the Monster was flashy and raucous, the Hawk was refined and “polished,” *Cycle* said. It delivered modest power but across a broad torque range, and handled with “impressive agility” and “outstanding cornering clear-

ance.” Plus points: A center-stand was stock and the Pro Arm gave easy rear wheel access. Minus points: limited fuel range (130 miles including reserve), thin seat padding and minimal suspension adjustment.

- 1988-1991
- 37.5hp @ 7,500rpm/115mph (period test)
- 647cc liquid-cooled SOHC V-twin
- 5-speed, chain final drive
- 412lb (wet)/41mpg (avg./period test)
- Price then/now: \$3,995 (1988)/\$1,200-\$2,700

1992-1995 BMW R100R

The Beemer is the granddaddy in this class, little changed from Hans-Guenther von der Marwitz’s R50/5 of 1970.

Adapted from the R100GS, the R100R used the same frame and 60 horsepower air-cooled flat twin, but with a shorter (Showa) fork, 18-inch front wheel, low-level exhaust, and “classic” round rocker covers.

Final drive was by shaft using BMW’s Paralever single-sided swingarm, with a single rear Showa shock adjustable for preload and rebound. Seat height was down 2 inches from the GS at 31.5 inches. A four-pot Brembo disc stopped the front wheel, with BMW’s traditional SLS drum at the rear.

Cycle World tested the R100R in 1992 and liked the relatively light weight, low center of gravity and wide handlebar giving “a surprisingly light-steering package,” concluding, “It’s hard to imagine a more likeable, more capable all-round street bike.”

The R100R’s swan song was the 1993-95 Mystic with revised tail section and finished in Mystic Red. The last of the Airheads was the 1996 R100GS.

- 1992-1995
- 60hp @ 6,500rpm (claimed)/112mph (period test)
- 980cc air-cooled OHV flat twin
- 5-speed, shaft final drive
- 478lb (wet)/48mpg
- Price then/now: \$7,990 (1992)/\$2,500-\$5,500



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Vee Two USA debuts Hailwood Replica at the 2018 Isle of Man Classic TT

Vee Two Hailwood Replica

The Vee Two Hailwood Replica made its public debut at last August's Isle of Man Classic TT, displayed alongside the original Ducati 900F1 the legendary Mike "The Bike" Hailwood rode to victory in his famous TT comeback 40 years ago, in 1978.

Powered by the all-new Ritorno (Italian for "comeback") 905cc bevel-drive desmo V-twin engine, the Hailwood Vee Two is an exact copy of Hailwood's winning bike, which was powered by a factory prototype of the classic Ducati bevel-drive V-twin that was never put into production. The Vee Two Hailwood was created by Ducati specialist Brook Henry and sport bike and race bike accessory manufacturer Paul Taylor through their new joint venture, Vee Two USA. Henry produces the engines at his company Vee Two in Australia (veetwo.com), while the chassis, bodywork, decoration and final assembly is carried out at Taylor's TaylorMade Racing in Los Angeles (racetaylormade.com).

Henry acquired the original casting patterns, factory drawings and manufacturing rights to build the engine design a few years ago. "It had always been my dream to construct this bike," Henry says, "but it wasn't possible without the Ritorno. I worked hard to make it externally identical to the 1978 engine, but it is thoroughly modern inside, with the latest technology and materials giving 89 horsepower performance." Henry fired up the 905cc twin to applause from an appreciative crowd.

Steve Wynne of Sports Motorcycles, who built Hailwood's bike and arranged for Hailwood's ride, described the replica as "probably more perfect than the original." The original No. 12 Ducati that Hailwood rode was also on hand and was ridden around the TT Mountain Course in a 100.80mph parade lap by 23-time TT race-winner John McGuinness, immediately after he had won the 2018 Senior Classic TT on a 500cc Paton — his own comeback to racing after being sidelined for 18 months from crash injuries.

"The look of the bike is exactly as raced on June 3, 1978," Taylor says, "It's a true Hailwood replica." The Vee Two team was allowed



Mike Hailwood's original 1978 TT-winning Ducati (above), and Vee Two USA's incredible replica (below). It's perfect.

exclusive access to the original by owner Larry Auriana. It took Henry and Taylor 18 months to create the Vee Two Hailwood.

Only 12 of the Vee Two Hailwood bikes will be built, reflecting the racing number on Hailwood's bike in his celebrated 1978 TT win. Priced at £110,000 (approximately \$144,000 U.S.), a Vee Two Hailwood won't fit everyone's budget, but as one TT visitor said, "I've been looking at an original Ducati Hailwood Replica road bike, but the owner wants £35,000 (\$46,000 U.S.) for it. When you consider that is a road bike and the Vee Two is an exact, hand-made copy of a historic race bike, it does make you think." Ducati sold over 7,000 examples of the replica road bikes, all based on the 900SS street bike. Want a Vee Two Hailwood of your own? Act quickly, because even at their heady price, they're bound to be snapped up fast. More info: veetwousa.com





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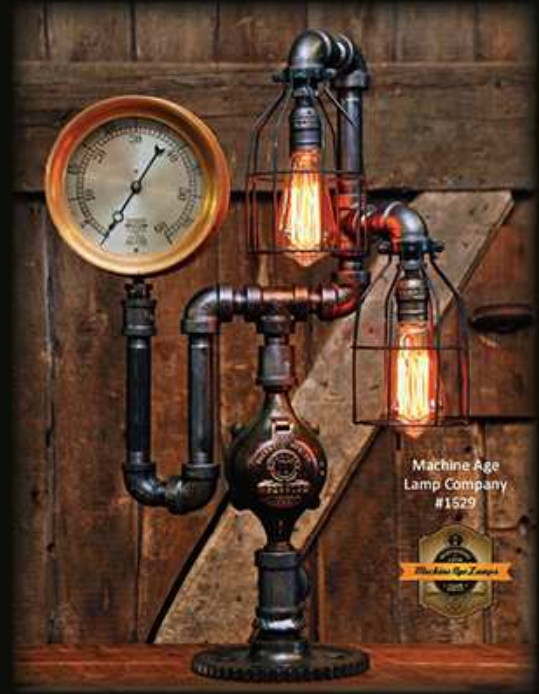
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DUKE OF OIL



1976 Yamaha RD400C

Story and photos by Dain Gingerelli

Yamaha's plan to update its popular 1975 RD350B model was simple: For model year 1976 they committed to building an even better version of America's favorite 2-stroke motorcycle.

The solution was found in upping the little oil-burner's capacity, which Yamaha engineers did by about 14 percent, stretching the stroke from 54mm to 62mm for a boost from 347cc to a full 399cc. The end result was the RD400C, perhaps the most advanced production 2-stroke motorcycle up to that time.

But the bigger-is-better philosophy was only the tip of the iceberg, as that bigger engine formed the foundation for a much improved street bike. To borrow from *Cycle World* magazine's test in their March 1976 issue: "The Yamaha RD400C is the closest thing to a perfect motorcycle that we've ever run up against. As a matter of fact, there is only one item that keeps it from being the world's first perfect motorcycle, but we won't tell you what it is ... at least not until we've told you about the rest of this beauty."

If CW's words come across as excessive hyperbole, consider *Cycle* magazine's lead-in to its road test the following month: "The quickest, fastest, best-handling, and hardest-braking lightweight ever now joins the engine capacity creep and gets more comfortable without giving up as the world's best, and only, midi-Superbike."

So what prompted the two leading motorcycle publications of the era to treat this mid-displacement roadster like royalty? Let's put Drew Immiti's sparkling original jewel (his RD400C boasts original paint, chrome and seat upholstery) on its centerstand for a close walk-around of what Yamaha offered 42 years ago.

First things first

Deciding which to examine first, the engine or the chassis, is tough, because as *Cycle World* stated, this bike borders on perfection. But since most (if not all) of us are gear heads, let's start with that blacked-out, air-cooled, 2-stroke engine, which was more than just a stroked-out 350. It was practically an all-new engine.

For starters, the ports (intake, transfer and exhaust), while similar in design to the 350's, differed in terms of timing to compensate for the reconfigured stroke length. In addition, each of the RD400C's cylinders were given a bypass hole that ran at about a 45-degree angle from a point 20mm above the exhaust port, leading directly to the exhaust passage. This helped facilitate kick-starting the

longer-stroke engine, plus the holes helped reduce low-rpm surging, a common issue with 2-stroke engines of the era. Another benefit was reduced exhaust noise at low rpm, and with noise abatement increasingly at the forefront of motorcycle legislation, low noise was as important to Yamaha as high horsepower was to the customer.

Each piston had a small, roughly 4mm-high and 10mm-wide cutaway on the bottom edge of the front skirt, which allowed direct passage from the crankcase to the exhaust port for just a few rotational degrees before and after top dead center. This helped relieve crankcase pressure to further reduce low-rpm surging.

The new 400's pistons also checked in with wedge-shaped keystone rings, replacing the L-shaped Dykes rings found in the 350B's engine. Keystone rings were less prone to sticking in the ring groove, although *Cycle* editors felt the Dykes rings created less drag on the cylinder walls, translating to more top-end power. But top-end power wasn't the only priority for many street riders; reliability was paramount, too, and Yamaha considered the keystone rings to be more trouble-free under most conditions than were the Dykes.

Topside, the 400C's cylinder heads accepted 3/4-inch long-reach spark plugs that dissipated heat quicker and more efficiently than the RD350's 1/2-inch-reach spark plugs. Small rubber blocks inserted within the 400's cooling fins helped quell even more of the engine's vibration noise.

Like the RD350B, the 400C took in its fuel and air mixture through a pair of 28mm Mikuni slide/needle carburetors. However, the 400's carbs were now equipped with external pilot air circuits to help eliminate an over-rich condition that often developed after riding the bike at low speeds — a condition that especially became apparent just before thwacking the throttle to show off the bigger engine's snappy power that more often than not could put the bike's front wheel high in the air. Wheelies were an RD rider's signature.

The 400C had a more powerful ignition system, with beefier coils pirated from the 4-stroke TX500's parts bin, and an ignition resistor that cut down voltage flow across the ignition points helped increase contact points life. The 400C's new coils



1976 YAMAHA RD400C

Engine: 399cc air-cooled 2-stroke parallel twin, 64mm x 62mm bore and stroke, 6.2:1 compression ratio, 35.48hp @ 7,000rpm (rear wheel, Cycle dyno)

Top speed: 95mph (period test)

Carburetion: Two 28mm Mikuni w/Yamaha Autolube oil injection

Transmission: 6-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, coil and breaker points ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Dual downtube twin-loop frame/53in (1,346mm)

Suspension: Telescopic fork front, dual shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: 10.4in (264mm) discs front and rear

Tires: 3.25 x 18in front, 3.5 x 18in rear

Weight (wet): 377lb (171kg)

Seat height: 33in (838mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 3.4gal (12.9ltr)/45mpg (period test)

Price then/now: \$1,219/\$2,500-\$9,000

and brighter sealed beam headlight and twin-bulb taillight necessitated a higher output generator, now supplying 280 watts. And on the subject of lighting, the RD400C was one of the first motorcycles to check in with self-cancelling turn signals. Progress and perfection.

Yamaha engineers also upgraded the clutch hub with redesigned rubber cushion dampers to soften the power delivery to the transmission, which in turn sported new, closer-ratio gearing with a slightly higher first gear. As *Cycle* stated in its report, "there is so much torque available and the clutch operation is so smooth that getting launched is much less hassle than you might anticipate." *Cycle* editors also waxed eloquent about the transmission's closer-spaced ratios during upshifts: "The tack needle will not swing back so far

after a shift that the engine will bog. Production-class road racers will absolutely love the new ratios." Considering that RDs all but ruled the 410cc production class, that was great news, indeed.

Framed

Those and other small yet significant upgrades (including an improved and more throttle-sensitive oil pump) to the engine created the new RD400C's heartbeat. The chassis and bodywork — its skeleton and flesh, if you will — boasted even more refinements and improvements.

Start with the engine's relocation within the RD's stout frame. Much of its basic configuration and geometry were carryovers from Yamaha's first successful Grand Prix 250-class racer, the heralded RD56 of the mid-1960s.





To simultaneously reduce intake noise and increase incoming air volume for better performance, Yamaha reconfigured the 400's frame to accept a larger air box, in the process moving the engine forward 20mm. Shifting the engine forward improved steering input and overall handling, too, as the added weight up front helped the RD400C's front tire stick better than the 350's while cornering. RD riders and road racers from that era are especially familiar with how quickly the perky little oil-burner could steer. And once in the corner at speed it took a steady throttle and full concentration to maintain the line so the bike wouldn't twitch left and right. Seasoned RD racers knew this was one of the 350's quirks, the price paid for a quick-steering motorcycle, and generally the solution was for the rider to shift his weight forward to compensate for more traction while tracking through a turn. The RD400C retained that mongoose-like agility exhibited by the RD350B into and out of corners, but with less drama when its 3.25 x 18-inch front tire fought for traction.

It helped, too, that the RD400C's Yokohama rubber was mounted on solid cast aluminum wheels as opposed to the RD350B's laced-spoke steel rims that most certainly generated a degree of spoke flex during full lean. These were among the first cast wheels offered on a production motorcycle, and even though the 400C's seven-spoke hoops looked massive compared to the 350B's more conventional spoked wheels, they



The 399cc air-cooled 2-stroke twin made just more than 35 horsepower on the Cycle dyno.



were a mere 100 grams heavier. Again, progress mixing itself with perfection, or as *Cycle* touted, “thus passing another race-track innovation to one of the most sporting street machines of its time.”

New, fancier suspenders

In terms of suspension, the RD400C checked in with some innovative features for the time. The fork legs were one inch longer than the 350's, and Teflon bushings between the tubes and sliders reduced stiction to help keep action smooth and steady. The crew at *Cycle* magazine also performed a simple modification to their test bike that many amateur road racers of the era already knew about, changing fork oil to a slightly heavier mixture, a trick that especially helped slow rebound damping. *Cycle* editors reported that adding Torco 20-weight fork oil “stabilized the front end.” Seasoned racers also experimented with fork oil volume in their RDs, some claiming that an extra dollop or two in the mix helped stabilize fork movement even more.

The rear shocks were improved, too, and they have an interesting back story to their development. According to *Cycle World*, Yamaha equipped one of their prototype RD400s with S&W aftermarket shock absorbers, and after experiencing favorable testing results they shipped the lot back to Japan. Coincidentally, those same shock absorbers were favored by many production-class RD350-mounted road racers in America, and since Yamaha designers had dedicated themselves to making the best 2-stroke motorcycle ever, engineers in Japan emulated the S&W's spring and damping rates as best they could into the 400C's rear suspenders.

Engineering improvements didn't stop there. Like the RD350B, the new 400 came with a superb front disc brake, but a similar hydraulic disc found its way onto the 400's rear swing-arm. The added stopping performance was instantaneous. Said *Cycle*'s editors in their report: “The little bike just squares down on its springs and stops. There is no wallowing or squirming or rear wheel hop. It just stops.” The added disc brake, coupled with various other refinements, added about 10 pounds to the RD400C's overall weight. At least they were “perfect” pounds.

The solid cast aluminum wheels were among the first cast wheels on a production motorcycle (left).

But stable high-speed handling coupled with rapier-quick steering wasn't the RD400C's only calling card. The bike was also comfortable, its new seat offering the rider a pillowy place to perch himself during a ride. Moreover, the engine, handlebars and footpegs were rubber-mounted to help isolate the rider from vibration, and to further quell the nasty vibes the exhaust system sported rubber connectors between the mufflers and header pipes. A rather smooth ride ensued, and coupled with 45mpg-or-so fuel economy, the RD400C wasn't a bad touring bike, either.

2-stroke tour bike

Back in the late 1970s, it was customers like a young man named Drew Immiti that Yamaha enticed into dealer showrooms where they could check out the new RD400C. When Drew visited Yamaha of San Luis Obispo (California) looking for a new bike, he was a 20-year-old college student attending nearby California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. “I actually bought it in 1977,” explains Drew today. “It was a leftover from '76 and I paid \$1,285 for it out the door.”

Impatient and bursting with energy fueled by bubbling young male hormones, Drew immediately set out to log break-in miles on the fresh engine. “The dealer told me to bring it back for its first service after I put 500 miles on it,” Drew recalls. “That was on Wednesday. I told him I'd be back on Friday for the service check. He looked at me like I was nuts. Anyway, I finished my finals on Thursday, then rode the bike until it showed 500 miles on the odometer, and like I promised, I showed up Friday morning for the service. When that was finished, I rode the bike down to my mom's house in Pasadena.”

That three-day caper was only the beginning of Drew's affection for his RD400C. The next day, he visited some college friends at San Diego State University (aka The Party School), and when the fun and excitement began to recede there he indulged himself and his bike in another adventure, riding the little RD to the nearby Mexico border, where he promptly turned



around and headed north, his sights set on Canada.

His unofficial and somewhat circuitous Tri-Flag route took him to visit other college friends at Chico State and Humboldt State colleges (aka Party School 2 and Party School 3), who let him sofa surf at their apartments in between parties (notice a particular pattern forming here?). Yet despite the distractions, young Drew eventually wound up at the Canadian border, where he and the ring-ding Yammie took a ferry boat ride to Vancouver Island to check things out before heading back to California. Quite an adventure, eh?

For the record, Drew had only a tank bag and rear-seat bag for luggage, complimented by a small wad of cash in his pocket. Who says youth is wasted on the young? The RD was Drew's first motorcycle, and the cross-country baptism forever etched a love of motorcycling into his somewhat twisted, yet maturing, psyche. As proof, today we present Drew Immiti, the adult, who with James Henderson is co-owner of Superbike Corse (sbkcorse.com) in Laguna Hills, California. As for Drew's first RD400C, he eventually sold it to upgrade to a BMW R100RS, but that's another story for another time.

Which brings us up to Drew's current RD400C, a bike he bought from a close friend who modestly prefers to remain anonymous. It turns out that the mystery man owned the bike for about 15 or so years after acquiring it in its original condition. Although the engine shows less than 2,500 miles on the odometer, the previous owner refurbished the engine with all new seals and gaskets, a wise move for an aging 2-stroke engine that idly sat for many years, because air leaks can prove quite troublesome in terms of performance and engine longevity.

The original paint and chrome were buffed out, and the seven-spoke cast aluminum wheels and other raw aluminum components were detailed to regain their original beauty. He mounted a set of IRC tires, similar to what were found on

Japanese performance bikes of that era, onto the wheels, and for show purposes a pair of new-old-stock mirrors were regally perched onto the handlebar. And beneath the flip-up seat rest the bike's hidden electrics and frame top rails, all in as pristine condition as the rest of the bike. A few years ago, the whole ensemble took best in its class at the annual *Motorcycle Classics* Vintage Bike Show at the Barber Vintage Festival.

But that surviving showroom-fresh condition hasn't stopped Drew's inner child from having fun on this little ringy-dingy. Shortly after these photos were snapped and archived he rolled the red-hot RD into his shop to replace its period-correct tires with a set of modern, stickier Pirelli Demon skins, and the bike's sedately high handlebar made way for a slightly lower-profile BMW-style handlebar. Ditto for the mirrors, which will be preserved in their original condition for another day, because Drew has plans to take the little smoker on its own extended road trip sometime soon.

Perfect ending?

So, what about that near-perfection on two wheels that *Cycle World* alluded to? According to the *Cycle World* test, the RD400C did have one minor flaw: its horn. Anemic in its aural performance, the horn, CW's editors said, "wouldn't make a hungover wino flinch, let alone inform some quadruphatically deafened cigar-puffing lardo that he is blindly stuffing his gas-sucking smogmobile into the lane you are occupying."

Harsh words? Perhaps, but as a former RD250/350/400 owner myself — and I speak with confidence on behalf of the thousands of other raging RD riders, too — we never used our bikes' horns anyway. We were too busy popping wheelies and strafing apexes to worry about beeping the horn. Because, as guys like Drew Immiti found out so many years ago, there can be as much perfection in the ride as there is in the bike itself. **MC**



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STYLISH SIMPLICITY

1964 Lambretta TV 175 Model III

Story by Margie Siegal
Photos by Nick Cedar

When I was growing up near Milan, Italy, scooters were everywhere.” — *Gianluca Baldo, owner, Bello Moto vintage scooter center*

The story goes that at the close of World War II, Italian businessman Ferdinando Innocenti looked at the ruins of his bombed-out factory and saw the future of Italian personal transportation.

Going a bit further back, Innocenti had founded a seamless steel tubing factory in 1922 and moved it to Milan in 1931. That factory, like much of Italy’s industrial base, was destroyed by the Allies during World War II. At the same time as Allied aircraft were

dropping bombs over Northern Italy, other Allied planes were dropping paratroopers to secure strategic objectives against the Germans. Once they hit the ground, the paratroops needed transportation, so Cushman scooters were dropped with the paratroopers. The Cushmans, ugly but very versatile, gave Innocenti an idea of how to create inexpensive powered transport that could be used by both men and women. Of course, Innocenti’s new scooter, like anything designed in Italy, would be chic and stylish, in addition to being useful. He looked for an engineer to translate his ideas into blueprints.

Design and development

Before World War II, Italy had an extensive airplane industry. After Italy surrendered to the Allies, the Italian aircraft industry was shut down. As a result, many former aircraft engineers went into the burgeoning motorcycle and scooter

factories, including aeronautical engineer Corradino D'Ascanio, who designed the scooter Ferdinando Innocenti had envisioned for him.

D'Ascanio disliked the contemporary oil-slinging motorcycles that needed constant maintenance, and drafted plans for a simple, clean, reliable machine for use as daily transportation, with a step-through frame that would not interfere with a woman's skirt. The concept was great, but D'Ascanio's design used stamped metal instead of rolled tubing for the frame. This was unacceptable to Innocenti, who insisted on rolled tubing, so D'Ascanio took the design to Piaggio, who used it for the first Vespa. D'Ascanio's ideas were reworked for Innocenti by two other aeronautical engineers: Cesare Pallavicino and Pier Luigi Torre.

The Innocenti scooters were trade named Lambretta, after a mythical water sprite that inhabited the Lambro River in Milan. The first Lambretta, the Model A, was introduced in 1947. It had a 123cc 2-stroke engine, a 3-speed gearbox, 7-inch tires and drum brakes, but unfortunately, no suspension. However, the engine



1964 LAMBRETTA TV 175 SERIES III

Engine: 175cc air-cooled 2-stroke horizontal single, 62mm x 58mm bore and stroke, 8:1 compression ratio, 8.75hp @ 5,300rpm (claimed)

Top speed: 60mph (est.)

Carburetion: Single 20mm Dell'Orto SH1

Transmission: 4-speed hand shift, enclosed duplex chain final drive

Electrics/ignition: 6v, flywheel magneto ignition

Frame/overall length: Steel tube/70.9in (1,800mm)

Suspension: Trailing link w/hydraulic shocks front, torsion bar w/single shock rear

Brakes: Mechanical disc front, drum rear

Tires: 3.5 x 10in front and rear

Weight (dry): 242lb (110kg)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 2.3gal (8.6ltr)/96mpg (claimed)

was more powerful than that of rival scooter manufacturer Vespa. Innocenti also introduced an American-style assembly line to streamline production. After a slow start, the new Lambretta took off and became popular with a transportation-starved Italian public.

Improvements started the next year with the Model B, a refinement of the Model A with full suspension and an improved frame. This was followed rapidly by the redesigned Model C (1950) and then D (1951), with an elegantly simple single steel-tube frame, better suspension and brakes, and larger tires. Models A, B and C were Europe-only, but the basic Model D and the more upscale Model DL were imported to the

United States starting around 1955, where they caught on with college students and urbanites. Both the D and DL came in 125cc and 150cc versions.

The 175cc TV series, intended as a top-of-the-line scooter for the enthusiast and the model for future Lambrettas, was first shown in 1957. The TV featured a completely new engine with a horizontal engine cylinder (previous engines were vertical), a





simple chain drive (instead of the prior models' complex shaft drive driven by bevel gears), a flywheel magneto, and a Dell'Orto carburetor, made by the same company that built carburetors for Ducatis. New 10-inch wheels made for better handling — and had room for larger brakes. The first version of the TV engine had a complex and unreliable kickstart mechanism. Later versions were simpler and more reliable. The engine, increased to 175cc by lengthening the stroke, was good for 60mph.

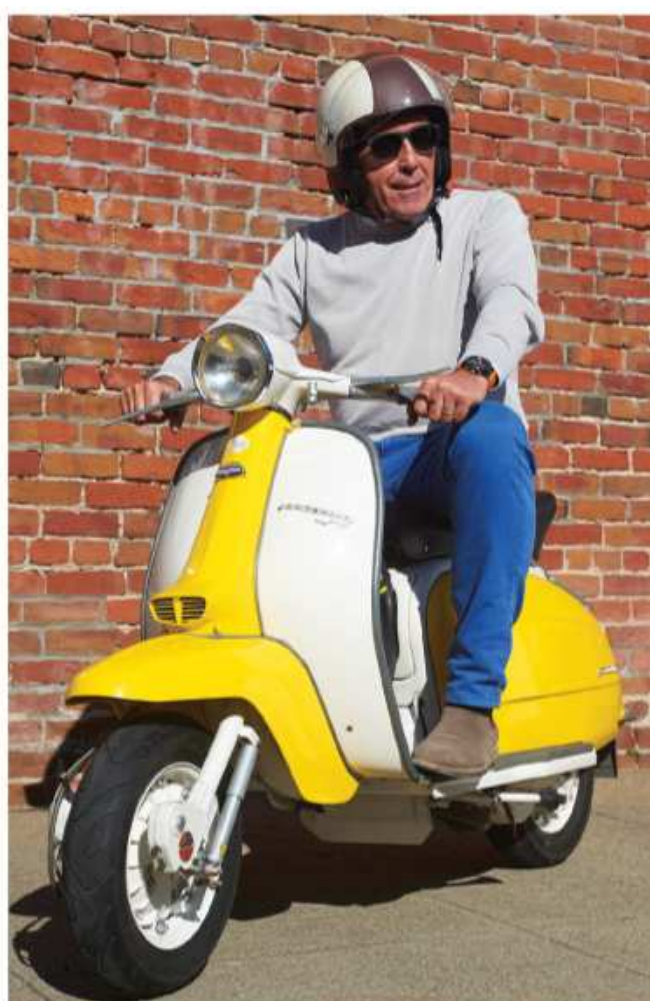
The faster and more powerful Lambrettas such as the TVs were favored by England's Mods, followers of an early 1960s movement that promoted continental fashion and modern style. Mods adorned their rides with multiple headlights and other accessories and congregated in English seaside resorts, where they sometimes got into it with the more working-class Rockers, who rode fast Brit bikes, wore black leather and sneered at the Mods.

Lambretta continued to improve its scooters, but sales of even the most stylish started to fall. Italians were becoming affluent enough to buy small cars, and public transportation had improved dramatically. Affluence affect-

ed the wages Italian factory workers demanded, and it became harder to profitably manufacture a vehicle increasingly sold in

developing nations in Italy. In 1972, an Indian consortium bought the manufacturing rights to the Lambretta and moved the factory machinery to India, where production continued until 1997.

Although scooter ridership isn't what it was in the postwar period, urbanites worldwide continue to ride scooters, and several motorcycle factories, including Honda and Yamaha, make them, and Piaggio has continued to build scooters in Italy under its Vespa trademark. Interestingly, Honda figured out how to profitably build scooters in Italy and started building its SH scooters there in 1996. Honda's scooter factory, in Italy's Abruzzo region, is still merrily pumping out scooters for the European market. In 2017, a new Lambretta, built in Taiwan but designed by the same design team that envisions Husqvarnas and KTMs, appeared at shows. New Lambrettas are now available at several dealers in the U.S., and along with the continued interest in new scooters, many enthusiasts ride and restore the classic Italian scooters of the Forties, Fifties and Sixties, and



Gianluca Baldo and his TV 175 Series III.



Under the right cover (above). The trailing-link front suspension uses two small shocks, one on each side (above right).

Bello Moto (bellomoto.com) in San Francisco, California, owned by scooter enthusiast Gianluca Baldo, exists to help them.

Fond memories

Like many Italians, Gianluca Baldo grew up riding scooters. While in his 20s, Gianluca left Italy to work overseas, and like many other things, scooters got left behind. He returned to Italy often, however, and on one of his trips home a friend loaned him a vintage scooter. "I rode from Milan to the family summer house on the coast. It gave me the opportunity to do what I had often done as a teenager. It gave me great emotions riding again after so many years," Gianluca says, so he decided he had to have another scooter. Somehow, one classic scooter became two classic scooters, which, as these things go, then became a garage full of scooters.

"The number of scooters quickly increased. In order to have a

working collection, I decided to hire a mechanic," Gianluca says. "The mechanic could keep my collection running in 15 to 20 hours a week, leaving him 20-25 hours to work on other people's scooters." The idea for Bello Moto, a sales and service depot for vintage Vespas and Lambrettas, was born. "It's a service for friends who share my passion for scooters, but who don't have the time, the space or the ability to work on their own," Gianluca says. Bello Moto opened its doors in 2011, and the friends of Bello Moto are now all over the United States and in several foreign countries.

Many of Bello Moto's customers bear a striking similarity to the young people who would have owned and ridden scooters in postwar Italy. "They are young kids who cannot afford to keep a car in San Francisco. They buy a used scooter, then, as they make more money, a better and more exotic scooter."

Gianluca never grows tired of his collection. "The beauty



Note the tiny luggage rack behind the seat. Under the left sidecover, the carburetor and fuel tank (rear bulge) can be seen.



behind collections is that you learn a new piece of the industry all the time. Eventually, you are recognized as a specialist, which is the most important reward." Most of the bikes in Gianluca's collection or for sale at Bello Moto are restored in Italy or other European countries, then brought to the scuderia for sale, as was the 1964 TV 175 Series III featured here, the top-of-the-line Lambretta during the years it was made.

TV 175 Series III

The TV 175 Series III was, for a scooter, a fast bike. (Speed, as Einstein noted, is relative.) Produced from 1962 to 1965, it boasted a mechanical disc brake (one of the first on a two-wheeler), a new carburetor, an improved magneto, a 4-speed transmission, an excellent exhaust system, and great styling with classy two-tone paint. Most of the Series III machines imported to the U.S. had a battery to boost the lights. The engine was adapted from the 2-stroke pushing the more basic Li series machines, but with a longer stroke and a different barrel and cylinder head.

The chassis was built up from rolled tubing, with pressed steel bodywork. There was a lockable glove box under the dual seat, an actual ignition key (instead of the earlier kill switch) and a fork lock. Unlike the early Lambrettas, the front wheel moves independently of the fender, which is attached to the bodywork.

The 175cc engine was rated at 8.75 horsepower @ 5,300rpm. This meant useable power in lower rpm ranges, where a scooter was likely to spend most of its time. Top speed was about 60mph. A TV 175 Series III was on top of the shopping list for many English Mods and scooter fanatics in other countries, and 37,794 units were sold over the four years the model was produced.

This particular TV Lambretta was restored to concours condition about five years ago in Italy and came from an Italian collector. The white and yellow are a factory color combination, with

white and red, blue and white, solid gray and solid white also available. A peppy machine even by today's standards, it is free-way legal. Gianluca says that this bike is reliable and has "nice pickup," pulling well from low revs. The suspension was restored, along with the cosmetic components, allowing this TV to zip around curves and through traffic. A TV will actually go offroad, and there are vintage photos of someone jumping a Lambretta TV from a small rise. An experienced scooter rider can get a scooter down a very tight road almost as fast as a dual-sport bike.

The glove compartment is small, but racks are available. "At the time, there were many different accessories for Lambrettas, but these are now very hard to find," Gianluca says. "Authentic accessories add a lot of value to your scooter." One accessory, a tire pump, worked off another accessory — a cigarette lighter! In Italy in the 1960s, everyone smoked.

Back in the day, most scooters were used for daily transportation, and they had to be reliable and keep going with a minimum of maintenance. A measuring cup for 2-stroke oil to be added to the gas comes with the scooter. If you fill up the tank, you add one and a half cups. Otherwise, you note the amount of gas you pumped, and add oil according to the helpful markings on the cup. Gear oil gets changed every three years. Otherwise, there is not much to do besides keeping your scooter polished, putting air in the tires, and changing the spark plug occasionally. "If your scooter is not running well, or if it experiences hard starting, change the plug," says Gianluca simply. "In fact, you should carry a spark plug and a spark plug wrench for good luck."

Stylish and economical, Gianluca's Lambretta is a reminder of simpler times. "It's the perfect wine country scooter," Gianluca enthuses. "Imagine scootering through beautiful scenery with your special friend, on your way to a picnic in the garden of a winery." Sign us up. **MC**

RECORD BREAKER!

Speed Twin racer

Story by Phillip Tooth

Photos by Phillip Tooth and the Wicksteed archive

When two young friends approached Triumph boss Edward Turner in 1937 and suggested supercharging a Triumph Speed Twin to break the Brooklands lap record, Turner dismissed them with a wave of the hand. They did it anyhow.

When Ivan Wicksteed and Marius Winslow packed off to Bedales, a private boarding school near Petersfield, southwest of London, England, their parents had no idea the boys would become great friends and go on to build a supercharged Triumph that would break the Brooklands 500cc lap record. But this was a school that nurtured individuality and initiative, and for these boys, that meant riding and tuning motorcycles.

In 1932, Ivan borrowed a 250cc BSA and won a bronze medal in the Schoolboys' Trial. A year later he was riding a 500 Norton, which propelled him to a silver medal, and then in 1934 the friends bought a 350cc Cotton-Blackburne. Marius wielded the spanners, and the bike was prepared for their first race at Brooklands on July 28. With the Webb fork's legs taped up to reduce drag and the fishtail of the Brooklands muffler extending 10 inches behind the rear mud-guard, Ivan covered the flying kilometer at 76.61mph. That was it — they were hooked on speed.

Earning the Gold Star

The Cotton soon made way for a 4-valve, twin carb 250cc Excelsior Mechanical Marvel and they started winning races. By this time, Ivan was an engineering student at Loughborough College — he said that he only enrolled so that he could learn welding. Money was tight, so when Marius suggested Ivan move to London where they could start their own motorcycle tuning business, Ivan said he couldn't afford the rent. Fortunately, Marius had wealthy parents who were bankrolling his adventures, and he would pay Ivan a salary. Ivan wasn't exactly a "works rider," but it was a start.

In May 1936, Marius tuned a 500cc Rudge-JAP and Ivan won a Gold Star by lapping Brooklands at over 100mph, winning his race by 100 yards. Then he



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The restored racer (at rear), with the leftover parts from the Allen replica (at front).

borrowed Jock West's old 494cc Triumph single and won the last race of the season with three terrific laps, one at 110.68mph. Ivan was 21 years old.

The Brooklands Gold Star wasn't made of gold and it wasn't very big, measuring just 1/2 inch across the points, but it became one of the most coveted awards in British racing history. Introduced in 1922 by the British Motor Cycle Racing Club, it was awarded to anyone who lapped Brooklands at over 100mph in a race. Only 125 were awarded before the track was closed in 1939. There was also the "Double Gold Star," awarded for lapping in a race at over 120mph. Only two riders had achieved this feat — Eric Fernihough and Noel Pope, both riding supercharged 1,000cc Brough Superiors.

Supercharging seemed the answer to top speed, so when Triumph revealed

their new 5T vertical twin in July 1937, the pals took note. Better suited to supercharging than a single, the vertical twin would also fit into a smaller frame than a V-twin. The Speed Twin would form the basis of the bike that would break the Brooklands 500cc lap record. And we know exactly how the pals did it because Ivan kept a scrapbook filled with photos, press cuttings and notes, while Marius wrote down every minor modification, every failure and every success in his workshop diary.

Development

"I feel sure that our only reason for ever getting the lap record was the very cold reception we received from Mr. Edward Turner, when, at the London Show in 1937, two rather young and innocent chaps walked up to a smart salesman

on the Triumph stand and asked if they could see Mr. Turner, and much to their mutual embarrassment were told they were doing so," Ivan wrote. "After that, the conversation went something like this: 'Oh, we are sorry, but we wanted to say that we are very keen to blow one of your motorcycles as we feel the design lends itself almost ideally, and we would like your opinion on the idea.'" That didn't impress Turner, who dismissed them with a wave of the hand. "This was answered by the following retort. 'A very logical conclusion. Good afternoon, gentlemen!'"

With no prospect of a discount from Turner, the pals turned to Ron Harris, a Brooklands racer who ran a motorcycle shop. Marius ordered a Speed Twin, less lighting and silencers, but with sports mudguards and a large oil tank.

On the first page of the notebook that covers the period between Jan. 19 and Nov. 23, 1938, Marius wrote: "Triumph Model 5T General Information. Frame No. TH.3477. Engine No. 8-5T 9135." He measured the bore and stroke, checked the valve timing and magneto advance, the valve lift and valve head diameter, and the compression ratio. Then he noted the volume of the combustion chambers, the dimensions of the exhaust pipes, and the valve spring pressure on the seat and at full lift. After dismantling the engine, Marius wrote: "The valve timing and type of cam are anything but what might be





desired but this will have to be made the best of." The neat, small handwriting tells you everything you need to know about Marius Winslow and his attention to detail.

He wasn't impressed with crankcase castings. "They are not a very good job," he noted, before cleaning them up by filing off the casting marks. A hole was bored in the timing chest cover so he could use an extractor on the magneto pinion without removing it. The center flywheel was polished and the crankshaft trued up. The big-end bearings were hand-scraped and the crankshaft carefully balanced. Using a rotary file, he opened up the inlet ports from 7/8 inch to 15/16 inch to fit a pair of Amal racing carburetors, but damaged a valve seat and had to order a new head. "Mr. Turner, in his efforts to keep weight down, had not obliged us by leaving plenty of metal around the inlet ports, and we began to wonder whether our task was too great," Ivan wrote. Marius made bronze valve guides for KE965 austenitic steel valves with 1/4-inch stems (standard was 5/16-inch) and larger heads, but screwed up cutting the seats. "This is the second head to go on the scrap heap! Hey ho!"

Marius was more careful with head No. 3. He cleaned up the valve rockers and ground down the end caps of the steel pushrods to shave weight. He fitted Martlet pistons for a compression ratio of 10.074:1 and reduced the combustion chamber volume to 25.5cc. By moving the inlet cam pinion one tooth the

valve timing was advanced to open 45 degrees before TDC (standard is 25), while moving the exhaust cam pinion retarded the closing by 5 degrees.

On Friday, Feb. 18, Marius installed the engine in the frame, and one week later the pals filled the gas tank with Pratts Racing Ethyl and went for the first test at Brooklands. It didn't go well. "Start on 831 plugs. Oil not returning. Take off timing chest cover and take down oil pump. Get this OK. Delivery then packs up. Find

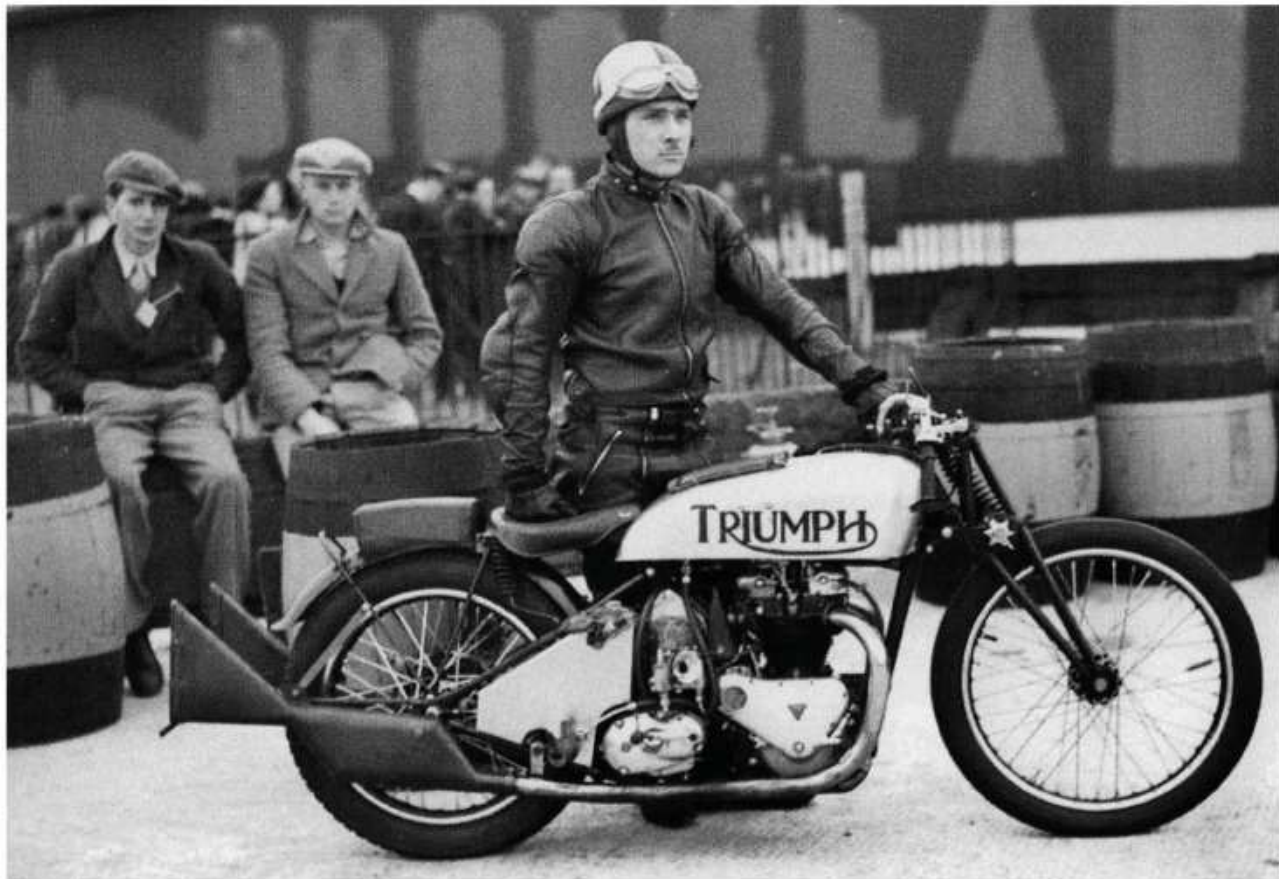
a bit of brass under ball valve on delivery side. Get this OK. Go out on track. Partial seizure. Petrol tank leaking like hell!" They were back at Brooklands on March 2. Ivan covered 24 laps, with a speed of 100.61mph on the second. Frequent visits to the track paid off, and on March 12, Ivan finished fourth after starting 12 seconds behind the first man away in a handicap race, with a best lap at over 107mph. Two days later, Marius wrote: "Interviewed Grenfell re supercharging the job." Granville Grenfell had tuned a Duplex-steering OEC-JAP with a supercharged 1,000cc V-twin, so he had a few ideas. "Decide to use one Arnott Concentric supercharger size 102 and Amal carburettor. However, he is a bit loopy and will very likely decide to change all this."

Ivan added: "We had no scruples about picking everyone's brains — the Bickells, Baragwanath, Fernihough, Grenfell, Beart, the Jacksons and the Archers." It was a list of Brooklands greats. "But there was surprisingly little consistency on any one point, and we had to finally make our own decisions."

Next the saddle tube was cut above the gearbox draw bolt lug and below the top chain stay lug. Two double-lugs were brazed into the end of the saddle tube. Mild steel plates, 3/8-inch thick, were bolted to these lugs to support the supercharger. "The blower is much overhung to the driving side of the machine to line up with the sprocket," Marius noted. "My part of the job is about finished," he wrote on April 2, "the outstanding things



Triumph collector Dick Shepherd aboard the racer on the remaining bankings at Brooklands.



Ivan Wicksteed at the Brooklands racetrack with the Speed Twin.

being to get Anstead to make the oil tank, and Grenfell to do the plumbing."

Back to Brooklands

The first test was at Brooklands on May 12. It started at the first push, but the supercharger pressure gauge indicated 5-10psi vacuum, not pressure. The pals were back the next day and the blower was registering just over 10psi. Ivan ran the Triumph around the track then came in so that Marius could check the plugs. "The mixture appears to be OK," he noted, before adding with the understatement of an English gentleman: "Unfortunately when going between 90 and 100mph the cylinder cracks off leaving the flange bolted to the crankcase."

Back at the workshop, Marius came up with a simple plan to prevent a repeat disaster. Making a clamp to go across the cylinder head, between the rocker boxes, he then cut a short piece of heavy-gauge tube in half lengthways and welded a nut on the outer radius. With this positioned against the upper frame tube, a threaded stud and two lock-nuts could be used as a jack between the frame and the clamp. "With this it is possible to get a lot of pressure on the head, and if the trouble is due to explosion pressure this should cure it."

More testing on May 27 showed the left spark plug had a lean mixture — it was running so hot that the ceramic was colored bright yellow. "The machine will not take full throttle, and goes on large throttle openings with the air control fully closed." But even with a second float chamber

the Triumph was still running weak, and the piston crowns were "a nasty colour." Marius decided to make a new induction pipe and fit the twin-float chamber Bowden carburetor that Harry Lamacraft took off his KTT Velo. A quick test revealed that the pilot jet was too big. "Grenfell reduced it slightly by hitting the top with a hammer," wrote Marius the engineer.

But carburetion was still too weak. "By flooding both float chambers at about 75mph things are improved. With the pipe to the blower gauge removed the plugs are more equal. Granville now states that the trouble is not due to the carburettor or the induction pipe but to the cross pieces of the blower delivery pipe being too long. He proposes to fit sliding plungers to find the perfect length and mixture strength! And day by day the wonder grew ..." On June 3 the pals were back at Brooklands, but even with the shortest delivery pipe possible the symptoms were the same. Marius measured the flow from the float chambers

and realized that 410cc per minute was "no damn good at all." Brooklands riders and tuners kept some secrets, but were usually happy to help. Borrowing a float needle from Fernhough's blown Brough, he realized the taper at the bottom was very much larger than on his Bowden, so it could pass more fuel — 758cc per minute. Now they were getting somewhere. After Bowden modified the carburetor it delivered 700cc per minute. On June 21, several test runs and minor adjustments delivered the verdict they were waiting for: "The mixture is now quite nice."

The first race with the supercharged Triumph was the five-lap Viscount Wakefield Cup on June 25. Ivan was on scratch — all other riders in this handicap race would get a head start. But the timekeepers penalized Ivan too harshly, and even with a best lap at 112.93mph he couldn't overtake everyone and Vic Willoughby won on a 350cc Velocette with a speed of 91.97mph. In his second race he finished second. "What is most gratifying is the consistent lap speeds and the maintaining of speed to the end of both races," Marius wrote. "Well done!"

You can't help but be impressed with Marius' optimism. Stripping the engine, he found the timing side piston in lovely condition, but the other was only fit for scrap. "It has seized like hell at the back. All three rings are jammed in the grooves. Also there is a split running from the bottom of the skirt to the scraper ring so that the whole thing can be worked in the hand. The bore of this cylinder is in a bad way. Otherwise, the engine appears to be in good condition."

The cylinder bores were honed and a used piston fitted. A new induction pipe from the blower led to a small, wedge-shaped plenum chamber with two internal baffle plates. The blower delivery port was enlarged and fitted with a cone made from sheet metal, pierced with small holes to diffuse the incoming charge. No blow-off valve was used. The weather was almost ideal for a test run at Brooklands on Sept. 7. With the blower gauge showing 5-7psi Ivan covered the half-mile at 116.17mph, but no



Wicksteed at speed on the Brooklands Triumph Speed Twin.



attempt was made to do a fast lap. The spark plugs looked perfect. Things were looking up. "It now remains to be seen whether a higher blower pressure will give it a bit more go."

After lifting the cylinder head and barrels to check everything was okay, Marius fitted 21 tooth sprockets to the supercharger and engine shaft to give a 1:1 ratio versus the previous 1:1.2. That was a good move. According to Marius' stopwatch, on Sept. 16 Ivan did a lap at 121.47mph with a top speed along the start-finish straight of 127mph. "The lap speed is very gratifying. Conditions almost perfect for a fast time."

The last Brooklands meeting of the year would be on Oct. 8. It was now or never. "Our blood was up," Ivan wrote, "and whatever happened we were going to have a bash at the lap records, Classes 500, 750 and 1000, not to mention the first 500 Double Gold Star."

Heavy rain lashed down as the pals unloaded the supercharged Triumph. They had been allocated a slot for the record attempt between the handicap races and the Hutchinson 100, the most important race on the mainland. The rain eased, but began to fall again, so the concrete was still slippery as Marius got ready to send Ivan on his way.

A short push and the Triumph fired instantly. Ivan roared off, sliding back onto the bum pad and hunkering down over the long silver tank. Round he went to get up speed before his crack at the record. The howl of the supercharged 500 could be heard all over the track as Ivan battled his way around against strong winds gusting against him on the Railway Straight. "He crossed the line to commence his flying lap like a bullet from a gun," *Motor Cycling* reported. "Everyone nodded their heads and said how smooth and sweet the machine sounded," said *The Motor Cycle*. It might have seemed impressive, but the engine wasn't running at its best. After changes to the gearing caused



by swapping wheels, Marius forgot to fit a lean enough main jet. "She eight-stroked all the way down the Railway Straight, the one place I had hoped to be able to make up for the wet track," Ivan recalled.

"What with the wind and the rain, it would have been no disgrace to have failed in the attempt but that wasn't Wicksteed's

The twin-float Bowden carburetor is mounted on the right side of the supercharger (above middle). Check out the open primary drive (above)!

idea of fun," *Motor Cycling* said. After 84.4 seconds he crossed the line again, with a lap speed of 118.02mph. The record was in the bag. "I can assure you I was the most surprised person when it was announced that I had put nearly 2mph on Minett's record," wrote Ivan in his scrapbook. Master of understatement Marius noted: "Do one warming and one flat-out lap. Raise 500cc record to 118.02mph."

One week later, Edward Turner placed full-page adverts in the motoring press congratulating the pals and invited them to a fine lunch in Coventry. After an apology for his rather curt treatment at the London show, he sent them to the factory where they were offered whatever help



Dick Shepherd on the Triumph, along with a host of volunteers on the bankings.

"It didn't have an engine number, but there were three numbers stamped on the bottom of the crankcase to identify the matched halves."

they needed to win that elusive Double Gold Star. Marius asked for one of the 1939 Tiger 100 frames to be modified to take the Arnott supercharger, a set of forks and a new T100 eight-stud engine with a bronze head. And he started a new diary.

At the end of 1938 the Speed Twin was loaned to Ron Harris, who had sold it to them in 1937, and put on display alongside other Brooklands record breakers. The friends got to work on their new project, but the bronze head and eight studs didn't make as much difference as they had hoped. There were so many problems, it was as if they were starting from scratch again. Frustrated, Marius closed his diary in June 1939. The last race took place at Brooklands on Aug. 7. The record holder would not run again, until Dick Shepherd came into the picture.

Renewal

The respected Triumph collector had bought a replica of the supercharged

Speed Twin built by Titch and Roger Allen in the 1980s. This used a post-war frame, with an eight-stud engine fitted after the six-stud engine blew up. However, it had the original handlebars — a gift from Ivan — and the Bowden carb. Also with the replica came copies of Winslow's diaries.

Sometime later, Dick bought a bronze-head T100 engine from a collector. It didn't have an engine number, but there were three numbers stamped on the bottom of the crankcase to identify the matched halves. He recalled that Winslow's notebook stated that his T100 didn't have an engine number, and so referred to the three numbers — the same numbers on Dick's engine.

Dick discovered the collector had the major components of the Brooklands record holder, and after years of patient negotiation, he bought the engine, frame, forks, wheels and tanks — including the small wedge-shaped plenum chamber filled with baffle plates. "When the engine

blew up in May 1938, the front drive-side cylinder base stud pulled out of the crankcase, so the hole was tapped oversize to take a 3/8-inch Whitworth thread," Dick says. "The middle stud on the timing side was there, but the thread in the case was so badly damaged that I don't think it would have finished another race — even with the jack under the top frame tube!" He left the 3/8-inch stud repair — it's part of the story — but welded up the damaged thread and re-tapped to standard. The replica also donated the Brooklands cans and Arnott supercharger. "Winslow's blower is on a Riley sports car," Dick says, "but the owner won't sell it."

And now, 80 years later, we're back on the banking. "If Ivan had ridden Marius' bike in sunshine like we have today he would have cracked the 120mph lap," Dick says. The engine sounds smooth and crisp, the Brooklands cans boom. And off he goes — bouncing over the potholed concrete banking and into history. **MC**

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TEMPTING FATE





The long way, before Ewan and Charley

Story by Hamish Cooper
Photos by Phil Aynsley
and the Giorgio Monetti archive

Fourteen years ago, Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman gave adventure riding its biggest boost when they rode from London across Northern Europe to New York on BMW R1150GS motorcycles.

BMW supplied the bikes, which became a best-seller after McGregor and Boorman's ratings-winning, seven-episode TV series *Long Way Round* was released in 2005. But Ewan and Charley weren't the first corporate adventure riders whose efforts boosted sales of a particular model motorcycle.

That honor falls on Leopoldo Tartarini and Giorgio Monetti, who 60 years ago rode across 42 countries and five continents to promote Ducati's new 175 Turismo. Like Ewan and Charley, they filmed their epic adventure, but on 16mm cameras with no sound. Sixty years later, a film and book are finally being released.

Like Ewan and Charley, Leopoldo and Giorgio had factory support (from Ducati), professional assistance in planning their route, and a list of dealers in some of the countries they travelled through if they needed help. Unlike Ewan and Charley, they rode without backup vehicles, did their own filming, took a year and covered over 37,000 miles, not four months and 19,000 miles. This is their story.

Who are they?

Two young lions of Italian youth culture of the 1950s, at first glance Leopoldo Tartarini and Giorgio Monetti appear to be polar opposites. Tartarini was a popular Ducati works racer, forced into premature retirement when a serious leg injury left him with a limp. Born into a Bologna motorcycling family, he had first ridden a minibike-sidecar outfit built by his father when he was just 4 years old. During World War II, Tartarini combined schooling with working as a mechanic at his father's business. When his father died in a motorcycle race after the war, Tartarini took over the business.

Monetti was from one of Bologna's wealthiest families, which dictated its sons qualified either in medicine or law. He chose law, but his passion was travel. While Tartarini was taking over his father's business, Monetti was taking extended breaks from his study to tour Europe



The fuel tanks of the 175s received more artwork as the trip continued. That's Tartarini's on the left and Monetti's on the right.

on a variety of motorcycles, including a Matchless 500cc single, a tiny NSU 100cc 2-stroke, and a Gilera Saturno.

Meanwhile, Tartarini was balancing running the family's motorcycle business with racing, especially in the new endurance events run along the length of Italy's rebuilt postwar road system. He first came to national prominence after winning his class in the Milano-Taranto race on a homebuilt BSA 650cc-powered sidecar. He then won the first Moto Giro d'Italia in 1953, covering almost 2,000 miles on his privately owned Benelli. Tartarini quickly elevated to works rider status, first with Benelli and then Ducati, but a high-speed crash in the 1956 Moto Giro forced him to quit racing, and there were fears he would never walk again.

Monetti also developed a passion for speed, but on four wheels. He took part in circuit racing and hill climbs driving Fiats he modified himself. Later, he would help Ducati's legendary engineer Fabio Taglioni design and develop the 1.5 liter V8 Formula One engine (he still owns it!). Monetti also built the first proof of concept turbo engine for Fiat. He is now long retired to a farm outside Bologna.

Tartarini's later efforts were even more spectacular. He established Italian motorcycle manufacturer Italjet in 1960, and also worked as a consultant for Ducati, most famously on the green-frame Ducati 750SS race replica of 1973. He died, aged 83, in 2015.

The two adventurers became united after Tartarini





suggested to Ducati management that he could promote the new 175 by riding it from Italy to Turkey, or perhaps Africa. Giuseppe Montano, Ducati's free-thinking managing director, countered with an even more audacious plan: ride the new model around the world. Montano, who was busy transforming Ducati into one of the world's major motorcycle companies, wasn't afraid of risk.

With Ducati agreeing to underwrite the adventure, Tartarini needed someone to ride shotgun. Monetti, with both his legal and mechanical skills, fit the bill perfectly.

Why a 175?

In the 1950s, most Italian motorcycle companies produced road models based on their light-weight, long-distance endurance racers. From 1955 to 1957, Ducati dominated many of Italy's road events, thanks to their brilliant designer, Fabio Taglioni. But as Ducati grew and pushed into export markets in the late-1950s, it needed a larger road-only model to challenge the established European, English and American manufacturers.

Taglioni designed and produced Ducati's first overhead-camshaft single, the 100 Gran

Sport, in 1954. The 100 Gran Sport appeared on the racetrack and soon proved unbeatable in its class, and would shape the company's future over the next four decades. The strength of the design was amply proven, as it was enlarged from the original 98cc all the way up to 436cc by the late 1960s. Versions of this classic single-cylinder engine remained in production until 1982 via Spanish affiliate Mototrans.

While Ducati developed twin-cam and even three-cam racers, it released the road-going single overhead camshaft

175 Sport at the Milan Show in November 1956. This was followed by the 175T Tourismo version. It was aimed at the touring rider, a new market for Ducati, which was more used to selling its performance models to local café racers.

The 175cc engine was very sophisticated, especially in an era when most motorcycles had a long-stroke configuration, with pushrods driving overhead valves, cast-iron cylinders, chain primary drive and dry-sump lubrication. The Ducati had a bore and stroke of 62mm by 57.8mm. Its single overhead camshaft was driven by bevel shafts and gears, and the aluminum cylinder, slanted forward 10 degrees, had a cast-iron



The luggage on Tartarini's bike adorned with sponsors.

Leopoldo Tartarini (left) and Giorgio Monetti with their 175s in India.



liner. A geared primary drive drove a 4-speed gearbox, and lubrication was an automotive-type wet-sump system, driven by a geared pump. In its ultimate Super Sport form, it produced 14 horsepower at 8,000rpm, with a top speed of almost 80mph.

By contrast, the Turismo model produced 12 horsepower at 7,000rpm, but with a dry weight of only 229 pounds it could nudge 70mph and had a cruising speed of 55mph. It was a near perfect combination of light weight and engine performance that could challenge the best from around the world. Ducati was now on the world map and the path to sales success. All it needed was some heroic achievement to confirm the 175T's durability and complete its marketing publicity. Enter Leopoldo Tartarini and Giorgio Monetti.

The journey

Much like Ewan and Charley's 2004 expedition, Tartarini and Monetti, under the sponsorship of Ducati, relied on experts to plan their 1957-1958 world tour. Viaggi Salvadori, one of Italy's oldest tourist agencies, mapped out a route that took in as many countries as possible that either had Ducati distributors or showed potential to become importers.

Ducati factory technicians gave both motorcycles a thorough going-over. They were mechanically standard, but the rear sub frames were revised to incorporate solo seats and luggage racks that carried special aluminum cases and a spare wheel. Braced handlebars were fitted, along with crash-bars. The riders were given detailed maintenance instructions,

including how to undertake complete engine rebuilds if they had to. They were kitted out in leather riding suits and given handguns for personal protection. Possibly becoming the pioneers of adventuring riding sponsorship, the travelers secured assistance from Regina chains and Pirelli tires and cash from other benefactors.

Their farewell from Ducati's factory on Sept. 30, 1957, was blessed by Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro and over 1,000 assembly workers, motorcycle club riders and Tartarini's race fans. Soon they were on their own and heading to their first big test.

Shock of the unknown

The world was undergoing huge political change in the 1950s. Many nations were in the process of throwing off the shackles of European colonial rule, while others were tearing themselves apart as populations revolted against corrupt regimes. Although just a day's ride east of Italy, Yugoslavia was a world away for wide-eyed Tartarini and Monetti.

Under President Marshal Tito, this conglomeration of six socialist republics was on a course of non-alignment with either Russia or the West while it expanded its manufacturing exports. The economy was growing, but it was still largely a closed society with a feared secret police force.

For the two weeks it took Tartarini and Monetti to travel south towards Greece they were shadowed by a man in a raincoat and grubby white nylon, and when they realized that a long jail sentence awaited anyone caught with armaments, they flushed their pistols down a toilet.

In Greece, they soon realized that lack of fuel would be a constant problem. Even with extra cans tied to their luggage, they frequently ran out. Like most explorers, Tartarini and Monetti soon modified their load. Heavy spare parts like pistons and connecting rods were left at local Ducati dealers, and the large and heavy expedition cases were replaced with featherweight cardboard suitcases. Their bulky leather riding suits were shunned for T-shirts and cotton trousers. "Impoverished immigrant style" was the description the riders gave to their new image.



The full course of the journey, around the world in just less than a year.



Tartarini (front left, white shirt) and Monetti (at right, plaid shirt) arriving back in Bologna on Sept. 5, 1958.

still in the throes of establishing a peaceful self-rule after kicking out the Dutch. The two riders, especially the blond Monetti, were confused by many locals as being Dutch, so authorities detained them for their own safety. After a couple of weeks, President Sukarno released the pair, treated them to a lunch with his ministers and sent an escort from his newly formed police force to accompany them out of the country.

Pushing on

The next stop was Darwin, Australia, to start 1958. After the lush tropical island, the riders described the Top End as looking like a "wasteland." The Northern Territory's capital was a tiny town of basic wooden buildings, not the prosperous city it is now. And the food wasn't much better. A misunderstanding in a restaurant resulted in another punch-up before the pair headed down to Melbourne. There they visited the Italian

Consulate General's office, where Monetti met the great man's daughter, and eventually would marry her (they are long amicably separated).

The next stop was the Americas. Rather than traverse the United States, the journey passed through one of the engineering marvels of the modern world, the Panama Canal. Panama City, the country's capital, also had a Ducati dealership. By March of 1958 they were on their way to Venezuela, a country still simmering with internal tensions after that January's coup d'état. Two incidents in Venezuela summed up a lot about the adventurers and their attitudes about traveling.

First was the practical joke: A local journalist on the island nation of Curacao, just off the coast of Venezuela, came to interview Monetti. His wandering hands revealed very clearly what he wanted. With great diplomacy Monetti said: "I can't accept, but my friend is very talented," ushering him to Tartarini's room. He then waited outside suppressing his laughter before the sound of a

They passed through Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Iran towards Pakistan and India. Just a few months earlier, a populist uprising had overthrown Iraq's British-supported monarchy. As Tartarini and Monetti rode into Baghdad, they noticed four people recently hanged under a colonnade.

The vast deserts they now crossed also brought enduring memories. Monetti said later the flat horizon where blue sky met yellow sands brought him "a sense of claustrophobia" that he found "wonderful" and matched later by a similar feeling in the Andes mountains of South America. Tartarini said he remembered "survival problems to find food and water."

The pair also began to discover that a simple trust of strangers and a non-judgmental attitude was repaid by kindness and honesty, and there were only a few occasions when they felt threatened. As the adventure unfolded, one amazing experience followed another. Sharing a highway in India with elephants used as beasts of burden, bullock carts, naked holy men and sacred cows was just one.

They rode through Burma and Thailand and headed down to opulent Singapore, which had a Ducati showroom. Opting to stay in the more affordable waterfront region found the adventurers caught up in a bar-room brawl and rescued by visiting Italian sailors.

More serious problems arose when Tartarini and Monetti entered Indonesia, which was



Giorgio Monetti and his well-worn Ducati 175, photographed in 2018.



Monetti's 175 (left) used lighter luggage by the end of the trip, while Tartarini's bike kept its hard bags.

scuffle was heard, followed by the journalist's hasty departure.

Second was the package from home: A package was waiting when they arrived at their hotel on Isla Margarita, a popular Venezuela holiday island. Tartarini's sister, Fiorella, had sent news from home and a recording of the new hit song *Volare*, sung by Italian master crooner Domenico Modugno. Tartarini was so excited he insisted the hotel replace their lobby music with *Volare*. Later Monetti would say: "I wasn't impressed by this episode. *Volare* didn't move me a lot. Poldino [Tartarini's nickname] missed Italy and *tagliatelle* (his local pasta). I didn't miss home."

Back on the road in April 1958, the pair met unimagined challenges on the Pan-American Highway south of Ecuador, where mud and slush reduced daily distances to less than 15 miles. Then they had to cross the Andes, including the 10,500-foot-elevation Paso del Cristo Redentor pass. When the bikes failed at high altitude, they had to take refuge in a tunnel to escape hypothermia, and then coast with their engines off down to the Mendoza region of Argentina, where they undertook repairs. "Today, you throw away an engine and fit a new one," Monetti says. "Back then, you fixed your motorcycle in the street." It took until June for the pair to make it into Brazil.

When they got to Sao Paulo, authorities suggested they spend 10 days off the bikes visiting one of the last traditional tribes living in the Mato Grosso. It left a lasting impression on Monetti, concerned about the changing world and the future it offered. "The authorities gave us a carbine and said that if we had any problems, shoot them," he remembers, "as if we had a license to kill."

He was equally unimpressed with the missionaries trying to end the indigenous way of life. "The local tribespeople received us with indifference, and after I met a missionary I took the liberty of telling him that maybe he was pestering them instead of bringing the faith because he was teaching something to somebody who maybe did well even without knowing it."

The original plan had been to travel by ship to Cape Town

and ride up Africa's east coast, but political unrest in many of those countries found the pair in Dakar, Senegal. Ironically, they followed a large part of the much later and famous Paris-Dakar rally route, but it wasn't a challenge to these seasoned adventurers. "We felt like we were almost home," says Monetti, who described the distance from Dakar to Europe as "one finger's length" on the world map the pair had. The Sahara was just another desert to cross.

Triumphant homecoming

Sept. 5, 1958, was a clear, sunny day in Bologna, Italy. In the late afternoon, a loud hum from a huge fleet of motorcycles drowned out the normal traffic noise on the city's main road, the Via Rizzoli. Tartarini and Monetti were on the last few miles of their odyssey and heading back to the factory they had left nearly a year earlier, surrounded by fellow Ducati riders.

A few days earlier a message had gone out to all Ducati factory workers: "All employees in possession of light single-camshaft Ducati motorbikes have to come to the factory with their bikes ... The employees will escort the two globetrotters from Bologna's Ducati dealer to the factory's entrance ... It is the director's desire that this event takes place with the usual given discipline, that doesn't mean to limit enthusiasm, but to highlight it."

Waiting at the factory gates with most of its workers was the proud managing director, Giuseppe Montano. Speaking from the heart, he said to Tartarini and Monetti: "We were with you in the wilds of the forests and in the deserts. We heard the nocturnal crackle of the machine guns with you in Syria and Indonesia, the screams of revolt in Venezuela ... and now you are here, like two warriors who have won a peaceful battle. And I know what you are feeling today. As all those do, who on long journeys tempt their fate or who leave their homes for war or necessity return with souls matured." Years later, Tartarini said of the ride, "This feat molded me, completed me. During a year like that everything happens, leaving you with values that will last for life." **MC**

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POWER TRIP

1985 Suzuki GS1150ES

Story by Greg Williams
Photos by Doug Mitchel

When Suzuki launched the GS1150ES in 1984, a single word succinctly summarized the machine — horsepower. There were 100 ponies chomping at the bit in the engine department, and *Cycle World* magazine pushed its test bike through the quarter-mile in 10.94 seconds.

That, said *Cycle World* in its April 1984 review, made the GS1150ES the quickest production bike the magazine had ever tested. *Motorcyclist* made similar statements. In fact, that magazine clocked the bike at 10.47 seconds in the quarter-mile.

Locomotion

Such prodigious locomotion wasn't lost on self-described two-wheeled street hooligan and adrenaline junkie Jose Rumbaut. He grew up in Chicago, Illinois, racing BMX bicycles, but as a young teen he longed for a two-wheeler with an engine to go faster. Luckily, his father, Jose Sr., owned motorcycles as a young man and was sympathetic to his son's dreams. His mother, Raquel? She just didn't want him to get hurt.

"I started off on a minibike in the eighth grade," Jose remembers. "I think it was called a Fat Cat; it had a huge rear tire and the engine had tons of power. From that point forward, I always had a connection to motorized two-wheelers."

When he was old enough to ride on the street, Jose and his father bought a used 1978 Kawasaki KZ400. Capable with his hands, a skill Jose picked up from his father, he went through the KZ and soon became known among his friends for his tuning skills. Those talents were put to good use when he also

took up dirt biking, riding hard on the trails and then fixing what broke. "I enjoyed riding on the street and in the dirt, but I also loved racing on the street and on the track and doing wheelies," he allows. "Pulling a wheelie was like second nature to me."

Bigger and faster motorcycles figured in Jose's life, and at one point he and his pals all rode Kawasaki GPZ1100s. That is, until a not-at-fault accident sidelined him. He quit riding for three years, but then in 1985 a friend showed up on an almost new blue-and-white Suzuki GS1150ES. With only 3,000 miles on the odometer, the Suzuki was for sale and Jose was smitten. "I fell in love with that bike, and my parents helped me finance it to make it mine," he recalls.

Over the next several years, Jose invested considerable time and money modifying his GS1150ES, turning it into what he calls a crazy street race bike. He installed a longer swingarm, a nitrous kit and bored the engine out to 1,400cc. That was his main ride from 1985 to 1999, but when Jose started a family, his wife didn't want him on a bike until the kids were off to college, so the GS1150ES was sold.

For the next 20 years or so, Jose would work on motorcycles for friends, but he was nostalgic for his favorite Suzuki. When he had a







1985 SUZUKI GS1150ES

Engine: 1,135cc air-cooled DOHC inline 4-cylinder, 74mm x 66mm bore and stroke, 9.7:1 compression ratio, 100.44hp @ 8,500rpm (period test)

Top speed: 141mph (period test/half-mile run)

Carburetion: Four 36mm Mikuni BS36SS

Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Dual downtube cradle, round and box-section mild steel/61in (1,550mm)

Suspension: Air/oil telescopic fork front, Suzuki single-shock Full Floater aluminum box-type swingarm rear

Brakes: Dual 10.8in (274mm) disc front, single 10.8in (274mm) disc rear

Tires: 110/90 x 16in front, 140/80 x 17in rear

Weight (w/half tank fuel): 557lb (253kg)

Seat height: 30.8in (782mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 5.3gal (20.5ltr)/49mpg (period test)

Price then/now: \$4,785/\$4,000-\$6,000

moment, he'd often snoop around the internet to see if one was for sale, but he rarely ever saw a GS1150ES listed anywhere.

Serendipitously, however, when one of his friends dropped off a GS1150 project that needed reassembly, Jose Googled the bike so he could have a quick look at an image. "That's when I saw this 1985 GS1150ES for sale in Illinois, just a half-hour from my house," Jose says. "I couldn't believe it, it was too good to be true."

The Suzuki was a one-owner machine that had covered 30,700 miles from new, and the owner was Gordon Siewert, who bought the GS1150ES from Lombard Kawasaki-Suzuki early in 1986. "I had my eyes on the GS1150ES for quite some time," Gordon remembers. "I had the

brochure and an article (the April 1984 *Cycle World*) that read 'The Prince of Power.' I stewed over it for weeks, wondering if I should buy it, as by now I had fallen in love with it. It was just so cool! I had saved the money to buy it with cash, and then in February 1986, the dealer made me a deal on 'last year's model.'"

Gordon used the GS1150ES as a weekend rider. A committed motorcyclist, he had other machines he used for commuting duty. On the Suzuki, he says he never felt the need to change a thing, opting to keep it stock because it suited him so well. "I rode it a lot the first 10 years and noticed early on that I had a rare bike: I never passed another blue 1985 on the road," he says.

As time went by, Gordon found himself wanting to preserve the machine





more than ride it. He had cared for and garaged the motorcycle its entire life, but after a great deal of deliberation he finally chose to sell it, replacing it with a 2012 Yamaha FJR1300.

Jose couldn't believe his luck in finding the machine listed on Cycle Trader. The price was right, but he didn't have all of the funds. He called his father and asked if he could help out. "When I told him what kind of bike it was that I wanted to buy, he just said 'Go get it,'" Jose recalls.

But there was one problem. The last of his kids wasn't quite off to college, and Jose didn't tell his wife he'd bought the Suzuki. "I hid it from my wife because I didn't want to lose out on the deal. I kept the secret for about a week, but the guilt was killing me — I'll never do that again," Jose says with a sigh. "She wasn't as upset about the bike as she was that I hadn't told her."

With the secret out, Jose began to fettle the GS1150ES. Working in his garage, he left the 1,135cc double-overhead cam inline 4-cylinder engine in the frame, but removed just about everything else.



Jose Rumbaut shows us another angle of his GS.

GS roots

The GS1150ES engine can trace its roots back to the 4-stroke GS750. At that time, Suzuki had been widely known for its production of 2-stroke machines such as the GT series. Due to impending environmental regulations in America and Europe, Suzuki needed a cleaner-running powerplant and developed the 4-cylinder, 4-stroke GS750 that was released late in 1976.

The GS750 featured a stout roller-bearing crankshaft, with one intake and one exhaust valve per cylinder motivated by a pair of overhead camshafts. Suzuki used the same basic platform — with upgraded crankshaft, connecting rods and pistons, and larger valves — in 1978 when it increased the mill to 997cc and launched the standard GS1000 and the slightly sportier GS1000E models.

With the GS1000 motorcycles, Suzuki entered the liter-bike era with machines that went fast, were purported to handle well, and stopped. In 1980, however, the company took the premise even further. The GS engine was taken to 1,074cc and the cylinder head gained an extra two valves per cylinder for a total of



four per pot. The cylinder head had a modified pent-roof design that encouraged a better burn of the intake mixture through a feature Suzuki dubbed Twin Swirl Combustion.

But Suzuki wasn't finished invigorating the GS lineup. In 1981, they used the new and improved engine in the cutting-edge yet controversial Katana. With unforgettable razor-sharp styling, the Katana paved the way for several years of Suzuki styling cues.

The early 1980s were not kind to the motorcycle industry, however, as the U.S. economy softened in 1982. In addition, imported motorcycles of 700cc or more were slapped with new tariffs.

As a result, in 1984 Suzuki retrenched and offered only three street and six dirt motorcycles. One of those street machines was the GS1150ES with the half-fairing.

The 4-cylinder GS engine was bored 2mm larger (74mm bore by 66mm stroke) to give an extra 61cc. That 2mm dimension was a common theme — the bank of four CV Mikuni carburetors were each increased 2mm to 36mm units and the intake ports were also increased in size by 2mm. Intake valves were enlarged by 1mm but the exhaust valves did not change in size and remained 23mm in diameter. However, both intake and exhaust valves opened

0.5mm farther into the combustion chamber than on the previous GS1100 engine. Cam timing was changed, the engine was strengthened with 20mm diameter piston wrist pins and an oil cooler was added. And compression was given a slight bump, from 9.5:1 to 9.7:1. "The list of modifications were made," wrote *Cycle Guide* magazine in October 1984, "to boost top-end power, yet still retain the low-end and mid-range that characterized the 1100."

But some things stayed the same, including the crankshaft, all internal gear ratios and the cases themselves. The GS1150ES ran from 1984 to 1986, and in addition to the two-tone blue and white it was also available in a red-and-white color scheme.

As noted, Gordon had looked after his GS1150ES, and that made it easy for Jose. All he had to do to the engine was detail it and perform a basic tune-up. Working around the powerplant, Jose also cleaned up the frame, which consists of a variety of round and box-section steel tubes joined together with a single backbone and twin front down-tubes. He removed the Full Floater rising-rate rear swingarm and inspected everything, including the Kayaba single-shock, which features four rebound damping settings and five hydraulically controlled preload settings, remotely adjustable via tuning knobs on the left side of the bike just below the seat.

Jose installed a new Metzeler Lasertec tire on the 17-inch rear wheel and also treated the Suzuki to new drive sprockets and a chain. Working towards the front of his GS1150ES, Jose completely disassembled the forks.

When the GS1150ES was introduced in 1984, the forks were different from any Suzuki had previously used. The new units offered improved compression damping, with a four-position adjuster and anti-dive technology that didn't depend on brake line hydraulic pressure to operate. This, *Cycle Guide*



Despite having covered more than 30,000 miles, Jose's GS looks like new.



Hidden behind the side fairings, the 1,135cc air-cooled inline 4-cylinder puts down 100 horsepower at 8,500rpm.

Suzuki specialist babbittsonline.com.

With the Suzuki cleaned and reassembled, Jose has been adding miles to the clock. "It's a torque monster with plenty of horsepower," he says, adding that to atone for chopping and racing his first GS1150ES, he'll be leaving this one completely stock — no nitrous this time around. So far he's made one solo trip to Door County, Wisconsin, which had him in the saddle for four hours each direction. "I'll be riding this bike for a long time," he says now that he's no longer living under a cloud of guilt. "And, happily, my wife is a happy passenger around town or on short hour-long rides." **MC**

explained, gave the front dual-disc brake on the new, smaller 16-inch wheel a firmer feel, as previous Suzukis had relied on brake-actuated anti-dive systems. Complementing the rear wheel, Jose mounted a new Metzeler Lasertec tire to the 16-inch front wheel.

What impressed Jose so much about his Suzuki was the condition of all the bodywork, the seat and parts such as the original exhaust system with its black chrome headers and dual mufflers. "It was mint," he says. "All the fac-

tory paint and decals are in immaculate condition, and you never see one of these still fitted with the stock exhaust."

Even the throttle and clutch cables, footpeg rubbers and handgrips are factory original. What Jose did have to replace were the dry-rotted, rubber-mounted turn signals and the clear windscreen that sits atop the half-fairing with its massive 8-inch headlight. When asked if parts were difficult to find, Jose says he located most everything he needed, new-old-stock, from





Riders line up for a group photo before Sunday's ride at the 2018 Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway at Seven Springs Resort.

GETAWAY 2018

3rd Annual Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway

Story by Richard Backus, photos by Karl Jarvis

When we held our first Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Getaway at Seven Springs Resort in Pennsylvania in 2016, we thought it'd be pretty amazing if even 20 readers thought it would be cool to join us for a weekend riding old bikes on back roads. Eighty-three of you showed up. And you came again in 2017. Apparently, we were on to something.

Our 3rd Annual Getaway was Aug. 10-12, 2018, and like the first two it was another great weekend of riding — mixed with occasional wrenching — and lots and lots of comradery, the glue that binds it all together. Old bikes need a little extra love, and we had our share of roadside adventures, including an electrical short that temporarily sidelined my '73 BMW R75/5. Yet those unexpected challenges are part of the adventure, and the weekend played out like a vintage bike show on wheels, with 63 riders on 58 classic Nortons, BSAs, BMWs, Triumphs, Laverdas, Hondas, Suzukis and more — including our first-ever Vincent Rapide and a Bimota! — rolling down the fabulous blacktop roads that dominate Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands.

Two days prior, however, we wondered if it would even happen. The local forecast called for a 90 percent chance of rain Saturday and an 80 percent chance on Sunday, but the weather gods smiled on us and the rains moved out as we gathered Friday night at Festival Hall, introducing ourselves to one another and checking out each other's bikes as the classic motorcycle movie *On Any Sunday* played on the big screen TV.

Saturday's 123-mile ride took us north to Johnstown, famous for an epic 1889 flood that almost washed the once-dominant steel-producing town down the Conemaugh River, and a lunch

stop at the top of the Johnstown Incline overlooking downtown Johnstown. Built in 1891 to encourage locals to build high above the river, the Johnstown Incline is the world's steepest funicular, with two counter-weighted, cable-pulled cars riding on rails up a 70.9 percent grade rising 896.5 feet from the river below. As one car rides down, the other rides up, a 400 horsepower electric motor keeping them in check.

An excellent lunch at Asiago's next door to the Incline was punctuated by a fascinating history lesson on the Johnstown Flood and the Incline, presented by David Casker of the Johnstown Area Heritage Association (jaha.org). David's talk was followed by a ride on the Incline, which is a truly singular experience, the cars almost silent as they rise and descend, and the views of Johnstown and the old steel works below are just incredible.

This year's special guest was acclaimed motorcycle journalist Alan Cathcart, who made the ride on a 1973 Yamaha TX750 plucked from RetroTours' stable of classic Seventies bikes. Never available in the U.K., it's one of the few bikes Cathcart had never ridden. Later, Cathcart enthralled our group during the Saturday banquet with stories from his decades-long career in the sport, one that's seen him rub shoulders with just about every motorcycle engineer, racer and luminary you can possibly imagine.

Sunday morning saw us out on the road again, this time making a 60-mile loop, heading south into the Laurel Highlands and miles of scarcely travelled back roads before turning north in Ohiopyle, then back to Seven Springs to pack up and head home.

Special thanks to sponsors Bonhams, Spectro Oils, RetroTours, Pecard Leather and Federal Transportation for helping making it all happen, and look for details on our next Getaway, because we're doing it again in 2019! **MC**



Clockwise from left: Festival Hall felt like a museum, filled with an incredible selection of bikes including a Triumph Hurricane and Laverda RGA Jota; lovely T150 Triumph Trident triple fronts a newer Thruxton; Andrés and Mary Alice Behrens brought four (!) bikes, including a stunning Ducati 750 Sport and a Bimota YB7.



Left to right: Richard Backus with special guest Alan Cathcart at the Saturday banquet; Joel Samick and RetroTours' rental bikes.



Left to right: Oh the horror! Bob Vail shields his eyes from riding pal Ray Shaw's attire; Joe Block got our first-ever Hagerty Motorcycle Insurance Best of Seven Springs Award for his 1950 Vincent Series C Rapide.



Bikes lined up in front of our lunch stop at the top of the Johnstown Incline in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.



Left to right: Jake Galek rode his Moto Guzzi Ambassador; Mark Gardner on his Ducati 900SS heading toward the Incline.



Left to right: The Johnstown Incline; the view from the top of the Incline with the old steel works visible in the background.



Landon Hall gets some help getting his Norton running right.



Left to right: Just one of the many great roads we rambled down; Eric Kurth tends to a loose bolt on his BSA 441 Victor.



Saturday's obligatory group photo with all 63 riders, taken at the top of the Johnstown Incline, Johnstown just visible behind.

INTERSTELLAR OVERDRIVE

1959 Royal Enfield

Story and photos by Robert Smith

Long before space became the final frontier, it inspired some of the most powerful imagery of the mid-20th century. The V-2 rockets of World War II ushered in the space age. Then, in 1951, the Soviet Union launched two dogs, Dezik and Tsygan, into space and returned them to Earth unharmed, suggesting that space travel for humans was also possible. It seemed like the universe and everything in it would soon be within reach.

Suddenly, space jargon and images were everywhere, reflected in the shape of everything from appliances to auto tail fins. Oldsmobile built the Rocket 88; the world's first jetliner was the Comet; *The Jetsons* were on TV; newsstands were crammed with space comics; and *It Came from Outer Space* was just one of hundreds of Hollywood sci-fi epics.

Cycle makers caught the fever too: BSA made the Star Twin and Road Rocket; Vincent built the Comet and Meteor; and Royal Enfield's performance twin of 1958 was named for patterns of stars in the celestial sphere: Constellation.

Space race

It seems to be a little-known fact that for 10 years, Royal Enfield made Britain's biggest capacity parallel twins. The 693cc Super Meteor and Constellation held the title from 1953 to 1962, when Norton launched its 750 Atlas. (Enfield came back with the 750 Interceptor.) And like most of the other British twins (BSA being the exception), Enfield's bigger banger started out as a half-liter. The prosaically named 500 Twin first appeared from RE's Redditch, England, factory in 1948. And while it aped many of the characteristics of the other British parallel twins, it had some exclusive Enfield features.

The vertically split engine cases included a separate compartment holding four Imperial pints of engine oil, creating a dry sump engine with an internal oil tank. The oil was circulated by Enfield's unique reciprocating, double-acting piston pump with a replaceable felt filter. The two separate (and interchangeable) iron cylinder barrels of 64mm bore had extended sleeves that were spigoted deep into the crankcase. Each was topped with a light alloy cylinder head, fed from a single Amal 276 carburetor.

The iron crankshaft ran on a roller bearing/ball bearing combination with two plain big end journals giving a stroke of 77mm. Light alloy connecting rods with split big ends ran directly on the crank, thus making the rods "disposable" when



worn — a practice shared with Triumph. Like Triumph's twins, the Enfield used two camshafts, but driven by a single chain instead of gears. The cams were removable through the primary side without splitting the cases via a pair of circular access plates. The pushrods, one at each corner of the engine, operated the four valves via rockers, each accessed by an alloy cover.

Unusual for the time was the Enfield's ignition system. Instead of the usual magneto was a coil ignition system fed by a 6-volt battery charged by a DC generator. Contact breaker points were mounted inside a distributor driven off the generator.

In typical Enfield fashion, the 4-speed Albion gearbox bolted right to the back of the engine — known as "semi-unit." The frame, front and rear suspension and cycle parts followed the same year's Bullet single pretty closely, including a similar



open loop frame. It's worth noting that Enfield (along with AJS/Matchless) was one of the first to use swingarm rear suspension, six years before BSA, Norton and Triumph. The 500 Twin was smooth and reasonably quick, weighing 390 pounds dry and making 25 horsepower, giving it 85mph potential, according to period reports.

Mighty Meteor

The Constellation's progenitor, the 693cc Meteor, was launched in 1953. And because Enfield was never a high-volume manufacturer, the factory did what it could to minimize proliferation in the parts bin.

Whether or not its 693cc engine capacity was chosen to keep the Enfield Twin ahead of its 650cc competition, the choice

had technical and production merit. The 70mm bore meant the engine could use much of the top end technology of the 350 Bullet, including the pistons and combustion chamber design.

The Meteor's 90mm stroke was also borrowed from the Bullet, conveniently being about the maximum that could fit in the existing 500 Twin crankcases. To improve braking performance, the existing 6-inch drum front brake was "twinned" instead of producing a new item of larger diameter. The rest of the Meteor mostly echoed the 500.

For 1954, Enfield's new "casquette" (French for "cap") was fitted to both the 500 and Meteor. This alloy casting formed the top triple-tree and contained the headlight, instruments and switches. A new frame with dual loops behind the powertrain was introduced for 1955, and for 1956 a compression increase



1959 ROYAL ENFIELD CONSTELLATION

Engine: 693cc air-cooled OHV parallel twin, 70mm x 90mm bore and stroke, 8.5:1 compression ratio, 51hp @ 6,250rpm (claimed)

Top speed: 115mph (period test)

Carburetion: Single 1-3/16in Amal 10TT9

Transmission: 4-speed w/neutral finder, chain final drive

Electrics: 6v, magneto ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Single downtube cradle frame/54in (1,372mm)

Suspension: Telescopic fork front, dual shocks w/ adjustable preload rear

Brakes: 6in (152mm) double-sided SLS drum front, 7in (178mm) SLS drum rear

Tires: 3.25 x 19in front, 3.50 x 19in rear

Weight (dry): 403lb (183kg)

Seat height: 31in (787mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 5gal (18.9ltr)/51mpg (period test)

Price then/now: \$828 (1958/U.K.)/\$4,500-\$7,500



from 6.5:1 to 7.25:1 and bigger valves boosted the Meteor's output from 36 to 40 horsepower. Magneto ignition and an alternator replaced the DC generator/coil system. And it had a new name: Super Meteor.

Reaching for the stars

Competition among the Big Three British makers was heating up in the late 1950s, with BSA and Triumph's flagship models, the Super Rocket and Tiger 110 making 46 and 42 horsepower, respectively. Norton's 49 horsepower 650SS was waiting in the wings, as was Triumph's 46 horsepower Bonneville.

Royal Enfield responded with one more power boost from the 700 engine when the Constellation arrived for the

1958 season. Based on the Super Meteor, compression went from 7.25:1 to 8.5:1, and it had hotter cams, a siamesed exhaust system, and an Amal 10TT9 racing carburetor. Crankshafts were dynamically balanced at the factory to minimize vibration.

The engine now produced around 50 horsepower at 6,250rpm, driving the Albion 4-speed gearbox with its extra neutral-finder lever through the "scissor" clutch adapted from the Meteor Minor. The Constellation used the same frame and running gear as the Super Meteor, but replaced the painted





fenders with chrome-plated steel blades. The new 4-1/4 Imperial gallon (5 gallon U.S.) gas tank was also chromed, and featured a broad top panel finished in “polychromatic burgundy” with gold pinstriping. It looked fast — and it was, with a top speed of 115mph according to a 1958 *Motor Cycling* magazine test.

As the class horsepower leader, the Constellation should have been a good choice for production racing, but the promise was never fully realized. Constellations were usually the fastest bikes in the field, but frequently retired with mechanical issues. The closest RE came to a significant victory was in 1958, when Enfield dealer Syd Lawton entered a Constellation in the 500-mile endurance race at Thruxton circuit with riders Bob McIntyre and Derek Powell. Though they recorded faster times on the track than the eventual winners (Mike Hailwood and Dan Shorey on their Triumph 650), McIntyre and Powell lost time in the pits, handing the race to their rivals.

For 1960, a pair of 30mm (1-3/16 inch) Amal Monobloc carburetors replaced the racing TT carb. The tight fit behind the engine meant no room for the right-side carburetor’s float bowl, so both were fed from a single float bowl on the left side. Forward pointing “ears” were added to the side panels at the same time.

As was the fashion at the time, the Constellation got some body panels around the rear wheel for 1961 and a new, flatter dual seat. But the big news from Enfield in 1962 was a new model with one more stretch for the

twin. Bore increased 1mm to 71, while the stroke grew 3mm to 93 for a capacity of 736cc. The Interceptor would remain in production in various forms until Royal Enfield’s final demise around 1970.

The final iteration of the Constellation was in 1963. With production of the Interceptor in full flow, the Constellation was repositioned as a sidecar tug, with the Super Meteor-spec 7.25:1 compression 40 horsepower engine, coil ignition, big fenders, steering damper and revised “sidecar” fork moving the front axle farther forward. But by that time the sidecar market was dead, and the Constellation died with it.

Tony Cording’s Constellation

As Western (and briefly National) Sales Manager for Yamaha for 25 years, Tony Cording always had motorcycles front and center. His first bike at age 15 was a 1939 Matchless-powered OK Supreme, followed by a 1936 Series A Vincent single, “The one I really wish I still had,” Cording says.

As a 16-year-old bike nut in Britain in the 1950s, Cording had a top-five wish list: Top was a Vincent Black Shadow, then a Norton Dominator, followed by a BSA Road Rocket, AJS 650CSR — and a Royal Enfield Constellation.

Migrating to Canada at age 24, family then took priority until 1975 when he acquired the first of a number of Vincents — a series D Rapide. That was followed by a D Black Shadow and a Black Prince. Next came a Comet basket case that, with help from now-deceased John MacDougall, was turned into a replica “Grey Flash” racer. His



Bought as a basket case, Tony Cording is proud to have his Connie back on the road.



current daily driver is a hybrid series C/D “Super Sport” Comet with a 636cc engine.

“I managed over the years to acquire Vincents and the Dominator, but the Royal Enfield was one I never expected to see in Canada because they were never a very popular motorcycle,” Cording says. Then a couple of years ago, Cording shared his wish list with Vancouver vintage bike master builder Dan Smith. “I said, ‘I’ll never find a Royal Enfield.’ Well, within two weeks, he’d found me one!”

The Enfield he found at the home of local Enfield guru Bob Wheeler was an early Constellation, dismantled and essentially a basket case. “I knew nothing about Royal Enfields, except the fact that I’d always wanted one.” A deal was done. Then Cording took stock of what he had bought.

“I picked up a matching frame and engine number. I didn’t realize at the time the gearbox had to match as well. The engine was in a state of significant disrepair. And there was a frame, wheels, tank, handlebars, and basically that was it.”

The engine had thrown a rod at some time, wrecking one cylinder and smashing the exhaust camshaft oil gallery. Remarkably, someone had welded the cylinder skirt back



together! “Like a jigsaw puzzle. The guy must have done some very, very careful welding.”

Deciding that cylinder had to go, Cording found another one on eBay, and set to work on the rest of the engine. The crankshaft was reground and the cylinders bored to 0.040-inch oversize, and the crankshaft was dynamically balanced, as Royal Enfield did at their factory. Another Enfield feature — the crankcases were coated

inside with a sealant to prevent oil migration. “I’m surprised that other companies didn’t do that,” Cording says. The liquid coating is highly flammable, so sourcing and shipping it was a challenge. Finally, after numerous attempts, Cording found a supplier in Canada — less than 10 miles away!

Cording was impressed with the size of the main bearings — “they’re monsters!” — and with the way the camshafts can be removed and replaced through access holes in the primary-side without splitting the cases. “It was a delightful engine to put back together again,” Cording says. “And because they’re separate cylinders, I didn’t have any problems getting the barrels on.” However, for the gearbox, Cording turned to Vincent expert Robert Watson. “He put the gearbox back together



Indian Summer: American Indian Enfields

After Indian went bust in 1953, Britain’s Brockhouse Engineering bought the rights to the name and started supplying English motorcycles to the Indian dealer network. What would be more logical than to turn them into Indians to take advantage of the name recognition?

So Brockhouse produced the Indian Fire Arrow 250 (based on the RE Clipper), 150 Lance (Ensign), Woodsman and Westerner (Bullet), Tomahawk (500 Twin), Trailblazer (Meteor/Super Meteor), and in 1958 the Apache (Constellation), shown at left in a 1958 *Cycle* ad. Introduced around the same time was a new model, the Chief, based on the Trailblazer, but with 16-inch wheels and available in full police trim.

Brockhouse sold out to AMC in 1962, which preferred to sell Matchless models as Indians instead. So the trickle of Enfields into the U.S. ceased, except ...

AMC went bust in the mid-Sixties, and the Indian name passed first to Berliner Corporation, then to Floyd Clymer. Clymer had always wanted to revive the Indian brand. His first attempt was a new V-twin Scout through a partnership with Friedl Münch of Mammut fame. Then came a batch of Velocette-engined machines using Italjet frames and cycle parts. Finally, Clymer agreed to buy a batch of Interceptor engines from Norton-Villiers, who then owned Enfield. When Clymer died in 1970, just a couple of prototypes had been built with the Italjet chassis, with the remaining batch of engines still in the U.K. The Rickman brothers, Don and Derek, bought the engines and fitted them into Rickman Metisse frames, creating the now-rare and desirable Rickman Interceptor.

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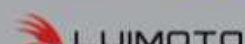
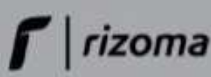
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again. And as has been commented on many occasions about the Albion gearbox, it is very agricultural, but very, very, strong.”

For originality, Cording stuck with Enfield’s notorious “scissor” clutch: “If I’d decided to go with the later style clutch, I’d have to buy a new gearbox,” Cording notes, “because the scissor clutch gearbox doesn’t lend itself to the (later) pushrod arrangement.”

Cording’s research shows his bike was one of 10 Constellations brought into Canada in 1959, nine going to Montreal and one to Toronto. And while the U.K. Royal Enfield Owners Club provides a dating service, confirming Cording’s bike to be a ’59 Constellation, they have no records of which bikes went where. The plot took a twist when Cording discovered a stock Constellation seat and gas tank didn’t fit the frame. It turned out the Constellation had been set up as an Indian Apache, the U.S.-market version of the Connie with wider wheels, a smaller gas tank and a larger seat. “By this time, I was so far down the road into making this a Constellation, I carried on,” Cording says. Unanswered still is whether the bike was shipped as a Constellation and modified once in Canada, a possibility as the only modification required to make it an Apache was the welding on of a different seat

bracket followed by fitting an Apache-spec seat and gas tank.

Another odd aspect of Cording’s Connie: The frame had been chrome plated. That suggested it may have been a show model, but more research showed that the chrome had been added later, not applied by the factory. “It’s a really nice job. The more I worked on the bike and looked at it with the chrome, the more I liked it. I made the decision to keep it chrome. And with the nice chrome on the tank, it has all worked out quite well,” Cording says. The tank itself is a new item from India. “The finish was perfect, though there was rust inside.”

Most other parts for the project came from Royal Enfield specialists Hitchcocks Motorcycles in Solihull, England (hitchcocksmotorcycles.com). “Hitchcocks were wonderful. Their website and parts availability was top notch. Their responses to my inquiries were always prompt.”

The only other challenge in the build was removing the seat nose bracket that had been added to the Constellation frame to suit the Apache seat and gas tank. Otherwise, Cording says, “It was so straightforward, it was amazing. It really was a lot of fun to work on. Getting the pushrods in, where you’ve got the camshafts at the front and back of the engine — that was a lot easier than on a Norton, I’ll tell you!” **MC**



Tony Cording and his restored one-of-a-kind Royal Enfield Constellation.

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DEVIANT DESMO

Ducati M900 Monster

Story by Alan Cathcart
Photos by Kyoichi Nakamura

Originality of design is at least as much a gift as a science, especially when it comes to concocting a new kind of motorcycle that nobody else has done before.

The problem is that you never really know if it's all going to work out right until you've translated your ideas into metal, for one man's flight of fancy can be another's passport to oblivion — weird, rather than wonderful. Even then, the ultimate judgment awaits: the verdict of the buying public.

On that basis, Italo-Argentine designer Miguel Angel Galluzzi must have been a mighty relieved man after the acclaim accorded to his Ducati Monster as it began to reach dealer showrooms around the world early in 1993, 25 years ago. This came after he was finally able to build the bike for which he'd had the sketches in his mental briefcase for ages, ever since he'd left Honda's Italian design studio three years earlier to join the Cagiva Group. Selling it to their Ducati subsidiary's commercial department had been tough, for this was a desmo V-twin-powered motorcycle that was radically different than anything Ducati had ever built before. But eventually Galluzzi got the go-ahead and the Ducati M900, aka the Monster, was born.

Even then, not everyone at Ducati was convinced of the bike's sales potential. This was reflected in the tentative production figure originally projected for the new bike for its debut model year in 1993: a measly 1,000 bikes. That was scaled up almost hourly when the M900 was launched at the Cologne Show in Germany in October 1992 to a rapturous reception from press and public alike, but the final ceiling of 3,000 machines that Ducati ended up producing the following year left many distributors and dealers round the world crying in their Chianti glasses. They sold more than 1,500 Monsters in Italy alone in 1993, while in the U.K. the original order for just 400 bikes, instead of being doubled, had to be scaled down to half that, all of which were spoken for by eager customers long before a firm price had even been announced. It was a similar tale around the world: Australia, always a key export market for Ducati V-twins, received a mere 40 first-year Monsters. The marketplace verdict on Miguel's deviant desmo was a decisive thumbs-up.

Road test

The chance to be the first outsider to ride the bike came about in February 1993, six weeks later than originally intended, as suppliers scrambled to come up with the components







1993 DUCATI M900 MONSTER

Engine: 904cc air/oil-cooled SOHC 90-degree V-twin, 2 valves per cylinder, 92mm x 68mm bore and stroke, 9.2:1 compression ratio, 75hp @ 6,750rpm (rear wheel, Cycle World dyno)

Top speed: 120mph

Carburetion: Two 38mm Mikuni

Transmission: 6-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Chrome moly trellis frame w/ engine as stressed member/56.3in (1,430mm)

Suspension: 41mm upside-down Showa fork front, Boge monoshock rear

Brakes: Dual 12.6in (320mm) Brembo floating discs front, single 9.6in (245mm) Brembo disc rear

Tires: 120/70 x 17in front, 170/60 x 17in rear

Weight (dry, claimed): 408lb (185kg)

Seat height: 30.3in (770mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 4.2gal/40-45mpg

Price then/now: \$8,950/\$3,000-\$6,000 (1993 model)

needed to build the bike much sooner and in greater numbers than originally foreseen. But the chance to spend a day with Monster No. 000001, shipped fresh off the Bologna assembly line to the Cagiva factory beside Lake Varese, where it had been concocted by Galluzzi in the space of a few months with the aid of a single helper, supplied an answer to the final question still remaining in the M900 equation: Did the go match the show?

Well, as the past 25 years have repeatedly confirmed, anyone who didn't find riding the M900 both a hugely enjoyable and also an addictive experience would be better off driving a car. I hadn't ridden another street bike for a very long time that so succinctly encapsulated the fun factor in motor-

The minimalist dash features warning lights and a speedometer, but no tachometer (above left).

cycling, magnified by the fact that this was such a practical, versatile kind of bike — what the Italians call *polivalente* (multipurpose). OK, you wouldn't want to ride from Bologna to Amsterdam on it in winter, but for sure it was a bike you knew you'd look forward to throwing a leg over for a quick blast to the pub or the shops, or a longer spin in town or country, with or without your best girl on the back. Sexist? Sure: This was a red-blooded, Latin street rod par excellence — but one that the prescient Claudio Castiglioni was targeting at female riders via the low seat.





To concoct his V-twin variant, Galluzzi took the 900SS' air-cooled desmodue engine and fitted it in a chassis comprising the front half of a 750/900SS frame mated to an all-new rear end derived from the 888 Superbike's to achieve the rakish look and muscular mien his desmo dream bike was intended to have. Up front, the Monster wore a set of Ducati's floating 12.6-inch discs and four-pot calipers (with a 9.6-inch fixed steel disc on the rear) matched to a 3.5-inch front wheel wearing a 120/70 x 17-inch Michelin tire attached to a 41mm upside-down Showa fork that somehow looked far more hunky fitted to the Monster than it ever did on the 750/900SS models it was developed for. A fully adjustable monoshock controlling a relatively skinny 170/60 x 17-inch Michelin radial fitted to a 5.5-inch three-spoke cast wheel (rather surprisingly made by Brembo) took care of the rear. Powering this parts-bin plot was an unmodified 92mm x 68mm, 904cc two-valve oil/air-cooled engine, exactly as fitted to the 900SS, in which guise it developed 73 horsepower at 7,000rpm at the wheel, running 9.2:1 compression and safe to nine grand if you really insisted.

However, that's where the smart stuff started, because by cleverly adorning this kit of parts sourced from existing Ducati models with

his minimalist street rod styling, Galluzzi had created a bike that was not only unlike any other Ducati ever made, at the time it had no competition from anything else in the marketplace. As a sport bike with bodywork deleted it was simply unique.

OK, you could distantly relate the new Monster to the Yamaha V-Max born back in 1985 and still selling well, but the Italian bike was A) a twin, not a four; B) handled properly in turns; and C) had that uniquely Italian touch of class that the brash, flash Mega Max had no pretense to claim. The Monster was no mammoth, in spite of its chunky appearance, but instead yet another demonstration of the flair of Italian designers for proportion, coupled with originality. And there was no greater moment of awareness of this art than when you threw a leg over the M900 for the very first time and got the shock of your life. It was tiny!

What looked in photos or even in metal to be a muscular motorcycle turned out to be petite from the rider's seat, almost delicate in its stature. Sitting there with the short, flat bars in front of you and your knees tucked neatly into the tank recesses, the footrests a bit farther back than I'd expected, it seemed the Monster was so short it ended 2 inches in front of your nose — just where the round, shallow, classic-



A snapshot of the prototype, taken on Aug. 11, 1991, with the bodywork in clay.



If the headlight looks classic, that's because it had appeared on the 900 Darmah (and the 1973 Laverda SF750) years before.

900SS' 403-pound weight in stock form, which if true may have canceled out some of the improved acceleration gained by the lower gearing. But the Monster felt infinitely wieldier than the SS, in spite of the slightly longer 56.3-inch wheelbase (the 900SS' was 55.5 inches), which didn't do much to help keep the front wheel on the ground if you gave it a big dose of gas off the mark. This bike was a wheelie-hound!

The Monster was always much more than just the straight-line muscle-twin its appearance may

have deluded you into thinking it to be. Taut and together-feeling at all speeds, it responded with paradoxical delicacy to rider input at low speeds, yet was stable and reassuring going fast. The steering was always quick and direct, making it an ideal city bike, just as it is today. But for sure that first version was geared too high, probably because Ducati's R&D mob still figured it to be a sport bike sans bodywork. Which it was — but one that also had to live in towns, where another two teeth on the rear sprocket would have reduced the unwelcome amount of transmission snatch.

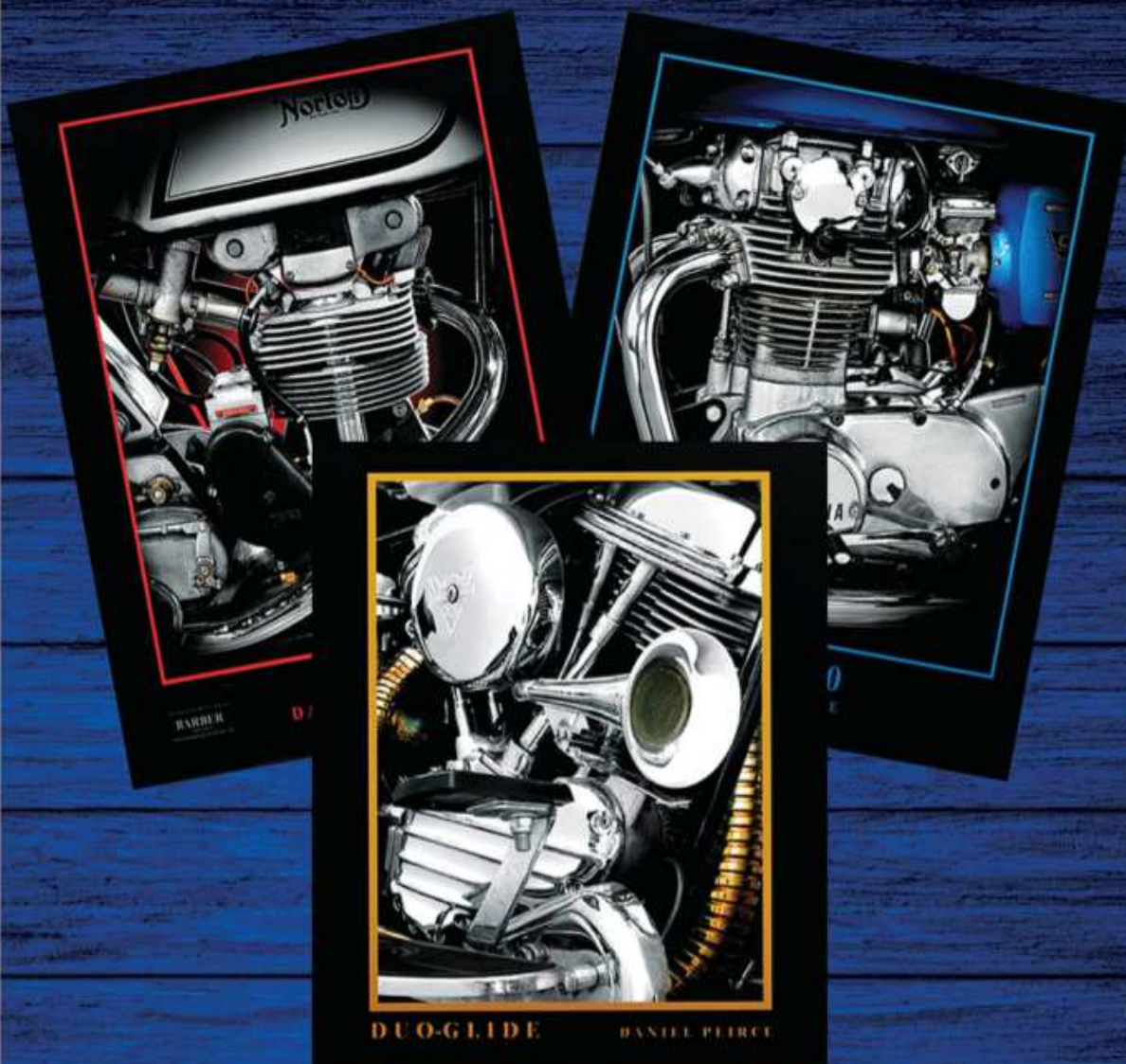
But there was nothing "classic" about the way the Monster performed. The secret was in the riding stance and the dynamic qualities of the bike, because outside of lowering the overall gearing a couple of teeth on the rear wheel, Ducati had made no mechanical modifications versus the 900SS, with which the Monster shared the same 6-speed gearbox. Rather surprisingly, the 407-pound declared dry weight for the unfaired M900 was actually a few pounds more than the faired

But that wasn't the main drawback of riding the Monster in traffic — working the stiff and unprogressive clutch lever hard would gradually seize up your left hand. Actually, a 5-speed gearbox would have been better suited to the Monster's nature, especially as the torquey V-twin engine pulled from way low, and packed the same meaty midrange punch as all



Miguel Galluzzi, now a designer at Moto Guzzi, in 2018 (left). Alan Cathcart at speed aboard the first Monster in 1993.

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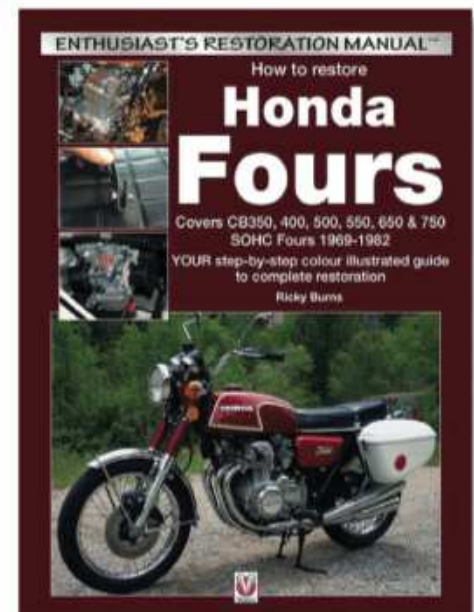
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Lost in Italy aboard the first production M900. Shouldn't we all be so lucky?

other desmodue models did back then. Even though it cruised quite happily at 90mph-plus on the autostrada — where thanks to the slightly reclined riding position you didn't have to hang on to the bars too hard — the Monster was actually quite comfortable at those speeds. This was really a town and country bike for short hops, rather than long ones where sixth gear might come in handy.

No criticisms about the suspension, though. It felt superb, with the progressive action of the rear Boge monoshock soaking up bumps and ridges with surprising ease in spite of the short 4.3 inches of wheel travel, giving a comfy ride that exceeded expectations for a bike that looked as muscular and angry as this one. The Showa fork was softly damped, with 4.7 inches of travel, but even hitting a bump just after the apex of a downhill turn with the suspension fully compressed didn't upset the handling at all.

This was a confident, capable motorcycle to ride hard on, especially with the excellent brakes, which were both sensitive and totally effective, making the Monster a point and squirt bike supreme. It wasn't a good idea to use the rear brake too eagerly, though, else you'd send the back wheel chattering into turns as the V-twin engine's inertia reminded you what you were riding.

Though you might have cared to stand on the pegs and stretch your legs a couple of times an hour if you were relatively tall, the riding position and seat were pretty comfortable even for a taller rider — though the longer-legged brigade might have trouble slotting their knees into the tank recesses. But this isn't a tourer, after all, and on the short runs the Monster was most likely to be used for, the close-coupled riding position delivered a great sense of control.

The Monster felt almost toy-like to ride, the narrow, flat bars giving instant steering response, coupled to the well-chosen steering geometry that allowed you to choose your line with precision, then depend on that surefooted suspension to ensure the bike stayed there. This was a hot rod that steered, stopped and handled like a racer, while that meaty desmo engine pumped out torque power you could call on instantly, thanks to the smooth response of the 38mm Mikuni carbs that had so totally transformed the 2-valve Ducati engines' character since the dark days of the wobbly Webers just a few years earlier. And, though the stiff clutch wasn't as progressive as a bike used mainly in town demanded it to be, the gearshift was slick and quick, with ratios that were well-matched, if one too many.

Looking back

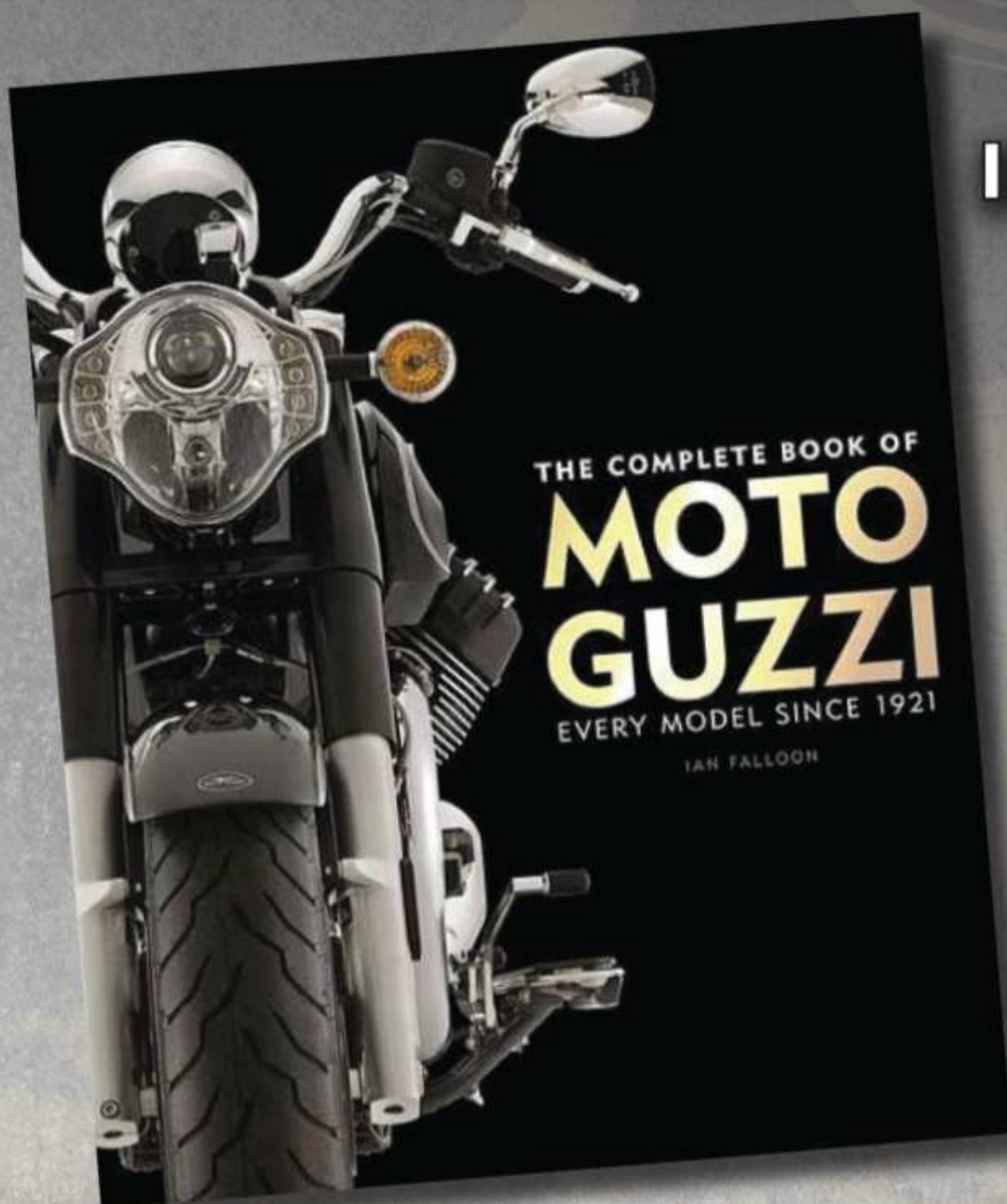
Massimo Bordi modestly refused to be photographed with Miguel Angel Galluzzi alongside their joint creation after coming out into the gray February day to ask my opinion of it on my



return to the factory: "It was all his idea, his work and his perseverance that produced this bike, not mine," said the Cagiva Group technical boss and Ducati chief engineer, "so please give him all the credit." Except, when I did, I got told off by Cagiva's PR department for giving Miguel a name check on the grounds that (and I still have the telex printout: remember them?), "It's not our policy to identify the name of any of our designers in connection with a specific model. Please in the future only say that it is the work of our Cagiva design team." Honestly!

In giving birth to the Ducati Monster, Galluzzi added an extra dimension to the Ducati range that allowed customers to enjoy the fun and brio of desmo V-twin motorcycling without feeling obliged to pretend they were Ducati's reigning World Superbike champion Doug Polen each time they twisted the wrist. He also created a new style of performance motorcycle, one that already back then you could see would become as vital an aspect of urban chic as Ray-Bans and Timberlands — or Harley-Davidsons. The designer desmo that the Monster represented was a Euro-style boulevard cruiser for the 1990s — an alternative rather than a challenge to the Harley lifestyle image. You already knew after riding it that every manufacturer in the world would end up copying it — but while imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, the original is almost always the best. And the Monster was — and still is — exactly that. *Complimenti, Miguel Angel!* **MC**

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Peter Howell (at right) took our Editors' Choice award for his 1968 Norton Commando 750 Fastback.

VMD 2018

Old school rules at Vintage Motorcycle Days

Story and photos by Richard Backus

The Barber Vintage Festival may have eclipsed Vintage Motorcycle Days as the largest vintage motorcycle event in the U.S., but don't think that VMD's lost its shine, because as this year's July 6-8 show proved, it's still a crown jewel in U.S. motorcycle royalty.

Truth be told, we hadn't been to VMD for a number of years, and frankly wondered if it would still glow with the same incredible energy we remembered from years past. After experiencing yet another weekend of what we've always called the Woodstock of vintage motorcycle weekends, we're happy to report that VMD is yet one of the greatest events on the vintage calendar.

The continued success of VMD is easy to understand. Organized in the mid-1990s by the American Motorcyclist Association (americanmotorcyclist.com) as a benefit for the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame, and held since the beginning at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio, VMD is home to the largest motorcycle swap meet in the U.S. The swap meet alone — it covers an incredible 35 acres — is reason enough to take in the weekend. Throw in great motocross racing, road racing and multiple shows set up by clubs and other enthusiasts in the Old Bike Barn Crossroads in the infield and you have Motorcycle Mecca.

Motorcycle Classics hosted this year's Ride & Show on Friday, with several dozen riders joining us for a leisurely 26-mile ramble on great two-lane roads carving through the surrounding countryside. Back at the MC tent after the ride we held a short awards ceremony, with special framed Daniel Peirce metallic

prints going to participating riders in three categories.

Don Beatle took home our Best Restored award, making the ride with us on his 1939 BSA B21 Standard. Previously his father's bike, the BSA had sat for years before Don restored it about 15 years ago. Ray Palmer took Best Rider for his fabulous 1957 Harley-Davidson Hydra-Glide panhead, bought four years ago from a friend whose dad bought it new in 1957. Editors' Choice went to Peter Howell, who showed up on his 1968 Norton Fastback, a bike he's owned since 2006. We make no bones about our love for Norton's venerable twins (I've had several and editor Hall recently got his first), and Peter's was fantastic. No stranger to Norton ownership, Peter bought a '68 way back in 1970, so his current Fastback brings him full circle.

The AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Bike Show, presented by Old Bike Barn, draws an impressive selection of classic machines. An especially strong contingent of custom and stock vintage Japanese bikes were present at this year's show, along with great machines from England, Italy, Germany and of course the U.S. Custom builders and other vendors lined the infield, along with live music, craft beer, the American Motor Drome Wall of Death and special technical seminars.

Vintage bikes rule at VMD, and owners young and old, male and female, blanket Mid-Ohio on their old rides. Original survivors seem to be favored at VMD, where a grassroots vibe dominates. For older riders it's a trip back in time to simpler days when riding a motorcycle was all they dreamed about. And for newer riders just getting into the sport it's an introduction to how it used to be and what inspired motorcycling's explosive growth back in the day. The 2019 event happens in July; we'll post event dates as soon as we have them. **MC**



Very nice Yamaha XS650-based special in the AMA Hall of Fame Bike Show (left). Andrew Frederick (above) caught up with us midway through our group ride on his self-crafted and very sanitary 1973 Honda CB350 café.



Heading out from the Mid-Ohio track for the *Motorcycle Classics Ride & Show* (left). Scenes like this (above) are common at VMD's huge swap meet, with used and new parts and bikes for sale spread over some 35 acres.



Twenty-somethings on mopeds are a growing part of the VMD vibe (left). This late-1960s Benelli-built Wards Riverside 125 in the swap meet looked very complete and was just one of hundreds of vintage bikes for sale (above).

WELL-HEELED

2018 Brough Superior Pendine Sand Racer



Story by Alan Cathcart
Photos by Kel Edge

In 2015, the legendary Brough Superior marque was reborn, with production commencing in France of the first new high-performance street bike in 75 years to carry the iconic British badge on its tank. This came after Austrian-based Brit Mark Upham, owner of the Brough Superior brand, had licensed famed French designer Thierry Henriette, owner of Boxer Design in Toulouse, to create the all-new SS100, which made its public debut at the 2013 Milan Show to mark the 90th anniversary of the model's introduction.

Henriette and business partner Albert Castaigne have relaunched Brough Superior as a manufacturer of high-performance, high-quality and inevitably high-priced motorcycles which, despite their retro styling, employ thoroughly modern advanced technology, high-class materials and radical design. Powered by a liquid-cooled, 88-degree V-twin engine devel-

oped for Brough by Akira Engineering in Bayonne, France, production of the all-new Brough Superior SS100 has gradually gained momentum over the past three years in the ultra-modern Boxer Design factory in Toulouse, now rebranded as Brough Superior's new home.

Ramping up

There, the 14-strong workforce now make each Brough Superior motorcycle entirely in-house, no longer using engines supplied by Akira. Sixty-two bikes were built in 2017 for delivery to customers, 125 are scheduled for 2018, with deliveries ramping up to 250 examples for 2019, which represents the annual ceiling envisaged by Henriette for production of what will always be a prestige brand.

Henriette has experience bringing a bike to market. Back in 2001, he built a series of 36 customer examples of the gorgeous Boxer VBI Superbike in the same factory before supplies of the Voxan V-twin engine dried up when Voxan, also a French company, went into liquidation. From that experience he's safeguarded against Brough Superior suffering the same fate by ensuring it will build its own dedicated engine in-house.

All of the born-again Broughs built so far have been the SS100 sport bike, whose retro styling clearly marks it out as a descendant of the pre-war SS100, the world's first Superbike. The Pendine Sand Racer, the second step in Brough's comeback



trail, was unveiled at the EICMA Milan Show last November. Back in the 1920s, the Pendine name — after the 7-mile stretch of beach on the south coast of Wales known as Pendine Sands, which at the time was Great Britain's equivalent of Daytona Beach — was used on all of Brough's customer race bikes, constructed on a bespoke basis for wealthy customers and certified to be capable of over 110mph, as opposed to the mere "ton" of the road-legal SS100.

But the new Pendine is a very different type of bike. Using the same essential platform as the SS100, Henriette has cleverly designed a totally different kind of bike, a roadster rather than a café racer. On the Pendine, the exhaust has been switched over to the left side of the bike, the twin pipes rising



2018 BROUGH SUPERIOR PENDINE SAND RACER

Engine: 997cc liquid-cooled DOHC 88-degree V-twin, 94mm x 71.8mm bore and stroke, 11:1 compression ratio, 100hp @ 9,800rpm (Euro 4)/130hp @ 8,000rpm (Sport)

Fueling: Electronic fuel injection w/two 50mm Synerject throttle bodies

Transmission: 6-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: CNC-machined titanium backbone w/engine as stressed member and tubular steel subframe/60.6in (1,540mm)

Suspension: Fior-type cast aluminum wishbone fork with twin articulated titanium triangular links and Kayaba monoshock adjustable for preload and rebound damping front, Kayaba cantilever monoshock adjustable for preload, compression and rebound damping rear

Brakes: 12.6in (320mm) Beringer stainless steel disc front, 9in (230mm) Beringer stainless steel disc rear, Continental MK100MAB ABS

Tires: 120/70R x 19in front, 170/60R x 17in rear

Weight (dry): 431lb (196kg)

Seat height: 31.7in (805mm)

Fuel capacity: NA

Price: \$58,000 U.S. (est.)

up together much like a Norton S versus the SS100's more functional-looking pair of stand-alone pipes on the right. Powered by a subtly remapped version of the same engine as used in the SS100, the Pendine is priced 5 percent less. Henriette says it will retail at 60,000 euro including 20 percent tax in France (currently just shy of \$70,000 U.S., and \$58,000 without the French tax, its expected price in the U.S. when it becomes available here in 2019) when deliveries begin in September after Euro 4 compliance has been achieved, against 63,500 euro (with 20 percent French tax, approximately \$74,000 U.S.) for the SS100.

The Pendine's other significant differences to the SS100 include different-diameter wheels compared to the retro-style pair of





18-inchers on the sport bike, though steering geometry remains unchanged. On the Pendine, the ultra-lightweight, CNC-machined, 16-spoke forged aluminum items feature a 19-inch front shod with a skinny 120/70R19 Continental ContiAttack 2 on its 3.5-inch wheel, and a 170/60 cover on the 17-inch rear's 4.5-inch rim. The brakes are also different, even though they're still made by local French specialist Beringer. Instead of the two pairs of smaller-diameter 230mm twin discs up front on the SS100, the Pendine wears just a single 320mm front disc gripped by a radial four-piston caliper, coupled with a 230mm rear stopper. Continental MK100MAB ABS will be fitted for Euro 4 compliance. "But we won't be able to meet Euro 4 requirements with just a single front disc," Henriette says with an air of frustration. "For EU countries we must fit a second front disc, but everywhere else it's up to the customer to choose which he or she prefers."

On the road

As the person who had the bright idea of introducing Mark Upham and Thierry Henriette to each other back in 2010, my ongoing reward for doing so was to become the first outsider to ride the new Pendine, in this case a pre-production prototype painted in a sparkling sandy shade, but presently devoid of ABS.

Throwing a leg over the single seat — still no passenger space on any Brough Superior yet built — shows at once how different this is from the SS100, the seat now an inch lower than before at 31.7 inches. As a result you feel much more a part of the Pendine, seated lower and more within it rather than perched atop it, as on the SS100. There's also a quite

different shape to the one-piece handlebar, which on the Pendine has its grips raised and pulled back, delivering a more upright, more comfortable and more spacious stance that makes riding the bike in traffic easier, and even enticing. In fact, if you can forget for a moment the sticker price, this would have to be one of the most satisfying street fighters I've ridden in a long time. The fat rubber grips feel meaty to hold and help convey a sense of substance to the whole bike, which has neat detail touches like the classy-looking brake and clutch master cylinders that all add to the sense of quality. Even the key, which features a nicely machined round bow with the Brough Superior name machined into it, is a visual work of art.

Part of that satisfaction comes from the ongoing mods that Henriette & Co. have wrought on the 88-degree V-twin engine, which is now even more refined and generally more rideable than the pre-production prototype SS100 I rode three years ago at the outset of its development. On the Pendine there's still plenty of poke and enough power to thrill, but it's the way that it's delivered that is even better than before. Coupled with a meaty maximum torque of 66ft/lb at 7,450rpm on the Euro 4 version of the engine I was riding, which delivers a peak of 100 horsepower at 9,800rpm, the pickup from a closed throttle is even smoother than before without being lazy — there is loads of torque as low as 2,000rpm on the tachometer.

The 6-speed gearbox is flawless in its operation. Neutral is far easier to find than before, and the clutch harnessing that meaty torque and power is unbelievably light in action, which makes this a great town bike, especially with the upright riding position. And when you do fire up the engine,



get ready for a surprise — the Brough engine's 88-degree cylinder angle isn't so far away from a 90-degree V-twin like any Ducati, yet the Pendine doesn't sound anything like a Ducati, more like an Aprilia RSV1000 with its 60-degree vee. It definitely has a higher pitched, more off-beat lilt issuing from those two swoopy-looking exhausts at its 1,400rpm idle speed. But get it motoring and there's an extra kick of power above 6,000rpm en route to the 10,000rpm redline, so it's definitely rewarding to wind the revs up.

The Pendine's front suspension is the most immediately eye-catching of the bike's many avant-garde features, combining a retro appearance with ultra-modern design. Based on the wishbone fork system created by the late Claude Fior, a French engineer who used it on his Marlboro-sponsored 4-cylinder Fior 500cc Grand Prix racers in the late 1980s, this was copied by BMW in creating the Duolever fork equipping its current 4- and 6-cylinder K-series models, as Fior had omitted to patent it. Fior in fact built several street bikes for Henriette's Boxer Design employing the same front suspension, an evolved version of which appears on all new Brough Superiors.

There are several effective benefits of the wishbone fork design, including the separation of steering and suspension functions, so that the front suspension doesn't freeze when you trail-brake into a turn, on the angle. There's also superior suspension compliance, thanks to a fully adjustable shock eliminating the stiction problems of any telescopic fork, plus inherent anti-dive, reducing weight transfer and maintaining constant steering geometry since the rigid upright only permits the wheel to travel up and down in a true vertical plane, even under the heaviest braking possible. There's also reduced unsprung weight, further aiding suspension compliance, plus clean, uncluttered aesthetics.

The wishbone fork also potentially offers immediate and subtle adjustment of all chassis geometry — trail, head angle,



The wishbone-style front fork (left). The key, adorned with the Brough Superior logo, sits at the front left of the tank (below).

wheelbase, ride height and weight distribution, as well as easier fine tuning of suspension settings than is possible on even the most sophisticated telescopic fork. Add in the enhanced stiffness-to-weight ratio of a wishbone front end compared to a telescopic fork and you can appreciate the reasons for the fanatical belief Claude Fior possessed in the worth of his design, which BMW engineers later recognized, and Henriette has now incorporated successfully in the new Brough Superiors.

You can experience these benefits very quickly on the Pendine by the way it soon becomes second nature to trail-brake hard and late into a turn without fear of the fork freezing. You can see the upper one of the two triangular links moving up and down to tell you that the suspension's still working to damp out the irregularities in the road surface. Henriette has retained just sufficient front end dive — as you can — in the system to give someone unfamiliar with alternative front ends the sense that the bike is actually slowing when you squeeze the front brake lever hard. Which it does, for that single Beringer front disc is quite effective at stopping what is a fairly light bike at 431 pounds dry, especially if you work the rear hard as well in a panic stop.

The Fior-type wishbone front suspension now employs a Kayaba shock adjustable for preload and rebound damping. Switching to the Japanese supplier instead of the Öhlins suspension on the SS100 probably accounts for most of the Pendine's reduced price, and for this kind of motorcycle, which is as close to an everyday real world ride as you're ever likely to get with a Brough Superior badge on the tank, the front Kayaba delivered excellent damping and good ride quality over the often rugged road surfaces of southwest France. A fully adjustable, direct-action cantilever Kayaba monoshock



offset to the right replaces the SS100's progressive-rate link in delivering exactly the same 5.1 inches of wheel travel, but this was too stiffly sprung, same as the SS100's Öhlins was when I rode that. It's not as supple as I'd like on a bike like this, even though the wheel travel is nominally there in order to deliver this.

If the SS100 was a sort of long-legged, lazy-sounding gentlemen's express, a two-wheeled equivalent of an Aston Martin DB9 or Bentley Continental, complete with the same high level of build quality, adequate rather than exceptional performance, and a sense of exclusivity, then the Pendine is a top-of-the-line two-wheeled Range Rover that isn't afraid to get its tires dirty, but would much rather you didn't take it anywhere too strenuous offroad, and especially not into any mud — sand is OK, though.

There's definitely more torque available down low than before, so you don't need to work the gears too hard to keep

the V-twin revving and the Pendine motoring. Though it still has an old-style cable throttle (and will for the foreseeable future, so there's no choice of riding modes as would come with ride-by-wire), the mapping of the Synerject ECU was really excellent, with spot-on fueling delivering a smooth pickup from a closed throttle, and a linear power delivery as revs mount. When you trail brake into a turn as the Fior fork will allow you to do, the transition point at which you open the throttle to start accelerating out of the bend doesn't betray any jerky or over-aggressive response that might cause the rear tire some grief, just a smooth, almost syrupy pickup.

No doubt about it — Thierry Henriette and his men have come up with a winner in the new Pendine, an appealing variant of one of the most individual and pleasing modern-day motorcycles that money can buy. It's just a pity that ownership of such a fine motorcycle will be inevitably restricted only to the well-heeled few. **MC**

“I always advise people to not tune their bikes so they idle well cold.”

Clutch question

Q: I have a 1988 Honda VT1100 with a hydraulic clutch. Since I got it last year, the clutch engages as soon as the clutch lever comes off the grip. The previous owner said that's the way it always was. I'm used to my 1972 Honda CB750 cable-operated clutch engaging near the end of release. The VT1100 clutch doesn't drag when fully disengaged. I rebuilt both the master and slave cylinders but nothing changed. I don't have an owner's manual, so I don't know if this is normal. Any feedback would be greatly appreciated.

Dan/via email

A: Hydraulic clutches sometimes feel odd if you're used to a cable-operated clutch, but what you're describing doesn't sound right. When operating the clutch, does the lever move far before you feel a change in the resistance? As an experiment, while accelerating in 3rd gear on a deserted stretch of road, squeeze the clutch lever and see where it is when the clutch starts slipping. If it doesn't let go until the lever is nearly at the grip, there's more to be done, although you may be at the mercy of the engineers' design of the master cylinder-to-clutch cylinder ratio.

Electrical problems

Q: My 1974 Triumph Trident continues to blow the 20-amp fuse located near the battery every time I attempt to kickstart the bike. I have also noticed that the directional lights and brake light don't work. The headlight is working, but I can't switch from low to high beam. Any advice on where one should look for problems?

Tony Zullo/via email

A: Since it's blowing the fuse when you kickstart it, I'm suspicious that either the rectifier is bad, or the alternator is wired to the rectifier incorrectly. Lift the seat and look for the black multi-plate rectifier. The leads from the alternator should be connected to the left and right connectors. On my 1974 Trident, that's green with yellow stripe on the left, and white with green stripe on the right. Brown/blue is in between, and red is attached to the center top lug. If yours is already like this, then we have to delve



Ready to take your classic queries: Old-bike mechanic Keith Fellenstein.

further. Disconnect the green/yellow and white/green wires and see if it still blows fuses when kicked. Assuming it doesn't, you then have to test the alternator leads against each other and to ground using a multimeter. There should be small resistance across the alternator leads, and infinite resistance from either of the leads to ground. If that all tests out there is a good chance your regulator is bad. Once you have isolated the fuse blowing problem, you can move on to the indicators and brake. Often the indicator switch is corroded, and they can be tricky to fix. The brake should be easier. For the rear, disconnect the wires leading to the brake switch and jumper the spade connectors with a short piece of wire. If the brake light works now, the switch is bad, which is not uncommon. The front switch gets gummed up by brake fluid leakage, as I just found out when I went out to my '74 to test this answer. Well, that and the rear bulb had vibrated itself to pieces again.

Hard to start

Q: I am the original owner of a 1978 Triumph Bonneville T140V. For the first four years of its life, it was the focus of most of my attention and I put 44,000 miles on it. Then life came along and the bike sat in the garage for more than 20 years. In 2011 I was given some parts for Christmas and the journey back to life for it began. Since then I have had the engine completely rebuilt, the carburetors thoroughly cleaned and have done tons of other maintenance so now,

even after sitting (battery on tender), it starts with usually less than three kicks from cold. My problem is it will not idle when cold, and when hot will idle at a high 1,500rpm, but will die off at an intersection if I do not blip it occasionally. I have the original carbs, but found one to have an oval slide barrel, which I had fixed. I also tried to use another set of carbs but still have the problem. Can you offer some advice?

Karl Stram/via email

A: I always advise people to not tune their bikes so they idle well cold. They don't stay cold long, and then they're running rich when they reach operating temperature. As for your high idle when hot, a few things can cause this. An air leak leaning out the mixture is one. Another, fairly common issue is a sticking auto advance unit, assuming you are still running points. I'd start by gapping the points and making sure the timing is correct, and confirming that the auto advance is lubed and working. After that, I'd look for air leaks around the carburetors, which you can test by spraying around the carb mounts with water. If the idle changes, you have a leak. In an effort to stop people from distorting the carburetor by over-tightening the mounting bolts, Triumph had moved to cupped washers with O-rings (they called them insulators) under them. If those are missing or flat, there is a good chance for an air leak around the O-ring that seals the carburetor to the manifold.

BSA oil pressure gauge

Q: I have a 1966 BSA Spitfire Hornet (A65) and I want to install an oil pressure gauge. How is that best accomplished and where do I tap into the engine?

John Damon/via email

A: From my limited knowledge and research, it's not feasible to fit a pressure gauge on earlier A65 cases. You can fit one using an old oil pressure relief body for testing purposes, but you then give up the pressure relief aspect of the valve, so you really can't use it daily.

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Joe Rocket Phoenix Ion Summit textile jacket and Motion Pro V3 cable luber

Joe Rocket Phoenix Ion Summit textile jacket

After suffering through triple-digit heat in my armored textile jacket, I was eager to experience the cool flow of a mesh alternative. It took me a bit to get used to the fit and feel of mesh, but the Phoenix Ion Summit proved to be downright comfortable for my daily 50-mile round trip commute on hardtop and gravel byways, and for those occasional 100-plus milers into the Kansas Flint Hills.

Things I Like: The Phoenix has a number of adjustments, but once I figured them out I had a comfortable fit that placed the armor in the right places and minimized the flapping in the breeze you can get with loose-fitting gear. Couple the near custom fit with the hi-viz color scheme and I felt as secure as ever. The 3/4-length is perfect for me as I wear a lot of my 6-foot 4-inch height in my torso, and the waist adjustment accommodates my 60-plus-year-old belly. With the liners out the mesh chest, back and arms flow air beautifully to keep me comfortable in the heat — and still comfortable in temps down into the mid-70s.

Riding in a 30-minute, steady rain the zip-out liner kept my torso dry and the jacket overlapped my rain pants sufficiently to prevent water from seeping up and over my waistband. The armor is accessible from the outside of the jacket, a plus as I didn't have to struggle to figure out which way stuff went back in after removing it to hand wash the jacket — yeah, I like my clothes to be fairly clean. I also love the collar and its zipper arrangement: It's non-chafing, doesn't catch my beard

and kept the rain from running down my neck. The pockets are well thought out, but I would prefer some in a different location, and while I was prepared to not like all of the snaps and zippers used in lieu of hook-and-loop, it was nice not to randomly hook stuff, including my beard and glove wrist straps. Sometimes it's the little things.

Things I Don't Like: As much as I liked the snaps, the arm-adjustment and chest pocket snaps were not the easiest to adjust or close with gloves on. The finish on the jacket was good, and while I found a few strings/threads that needed trimming the seams were all intact. I also thought the chest pockets were high. They are deep, but I'd prefer to have them more toward the bottom front of the jacket. The zipper pulls can rattle a little in the wind, and some are difficult to grab with gloves on, but those are all minor quibbles.

Last Thoughts: The Phoenix Ion Summit mesh jacket is an economically priced hot weather jacket with enough air flow to keep you cool, and sufficient and well-located armor to keep you confident. It performs in the rain and should perform in early fall and late spring with the thermal liner installed. The fit is great and the finish is good, and for the price this jacket will serve you well. If you are a warm-weather rider, probably the only reason you'll ever need to replace this jacket will be because your belly grew too much long before you wear it out. \$249.99. More info: joerocket.com — *Hank Will*



Control cable maintenance

Maintenance hounds know that properly lubed control cables are critical to safe and dependable riding. Up until now, the standard tool has been a fairly crude unit that seals the inner cable and housing so that aerosol lube can be pushed into the housing. It works, but it's messy, and it seems like you end up with as much lube on the outside of the cable as the inside.

Motion Pro's new Cable Luber V3 takes a completely new approach to the task. Instead of clamping onto the cable, the V3 houses the end in an enclosed chamber.

First, the cable end is fed through a large port in one half of the two-piece V3. Next, a labyrinth-type

molded seal is fed around the inner cable and then slipped over the cable housing. Next, the second half of the V3 — it's large enough to accommodate end fittings — is joined to the first and screwed

down tight. Once that's done, simply insert the straw from an aerosol can of lubricant into the end of the V3's adjustable plunger and start pushing lubricant through. Once done, push the plunger down to push any remaining lube captured in the V3 into the housing, unscrew, and you're done.

In our tests on a throttle and brake cable it worked perfectly, the lube flowing down the housing and with no loss at the tool. There's a very minor bit of cleanup after removing the V3, but its effectiveness and ease of use make the V3 a vast improvement over the old-style cable luber. \$19.99. More info: motionpro.com — *Richard Backus*



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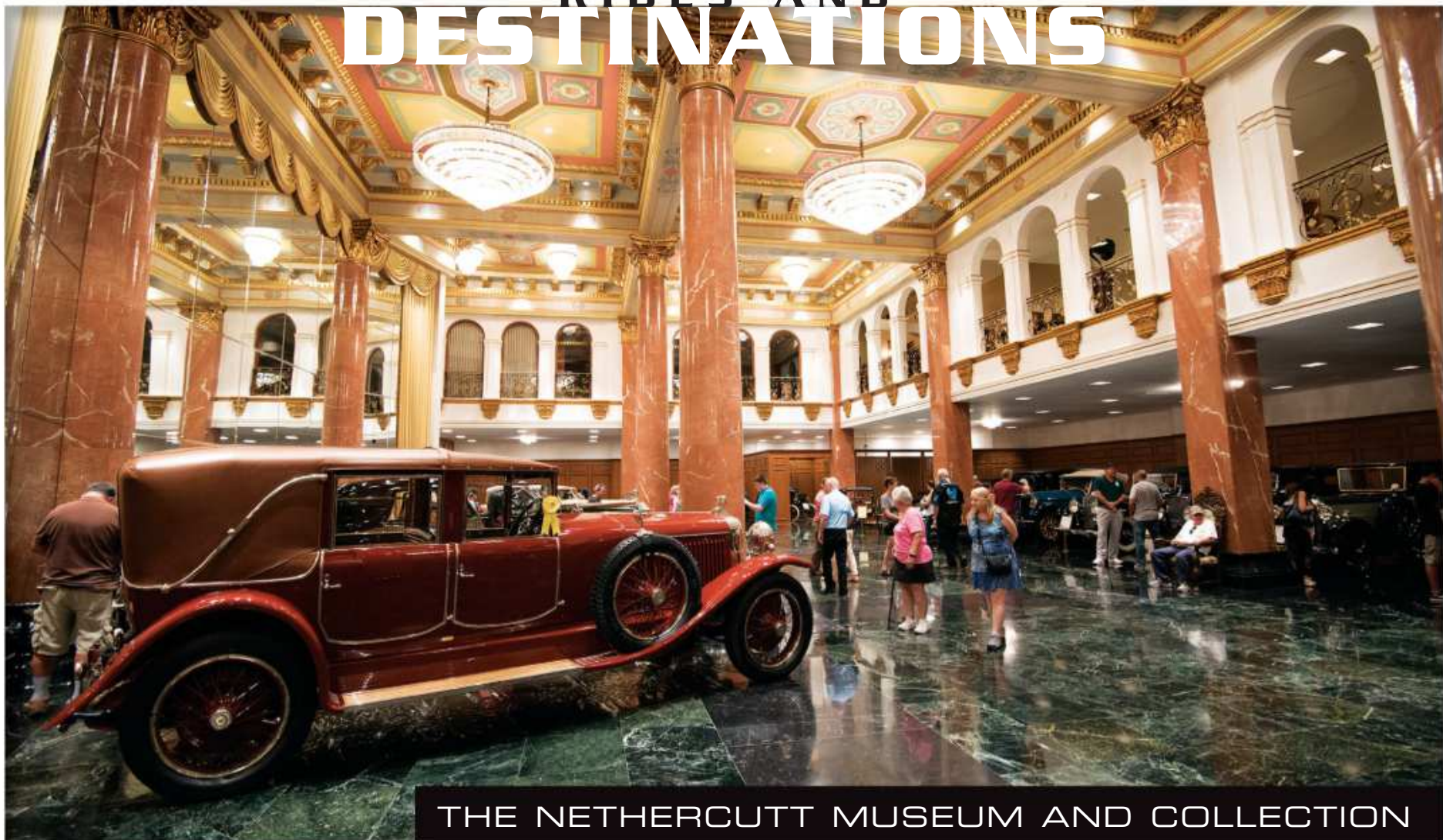
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RIDES AND DESTINATIONS



THE NETHERCUTT MUSEUM AND COLLECTION

Whatever you're doing, stop. Get off your computer, quit playing with your cellphone, and get on your motorcycle. Your destination is the Nethercutt Museum and Collection in Sylmar, California. It's outstanding, and you need to experience it.

The Nethercutt Museum (owned by Merle Norman Cosmetics, of which J.B. Nethercutt was a co-founder) includes several collections in two buildings. The first displays approximately 120 vintage automobiles, and you should prepare to be dazzled immediately; the collection starts in the lobby with a drop-dead-gorgeous two-tone blue-and-silver 1937 Talbot-Lago that looks like it just rolled off the assembly line. A grand hall showcases rows and rows of American

and European classic cars, with special displays for vintage components (horns, headlights, hood ornaments, spark plugs and other antique automobilia). There's a vintage steam locomotive (Canadian Pacific Royal Hudson No. 2839), its tender, and a private 1912 Pullman rail car outside, all restored to their original splendor. It's how the wealthy traveled back in the day.

To get the full measure of this magnificent collection, call ahead and reserve a tour. The tour starts across the street in a second large building that houses three impressive collections of cars, vintage furniture and musical instruments. Kyle Irwin (the Nethercutt's curator and master technician) leads the tours, and he is impressive. Captivated by his

voice and knowledge, I remember thinking Irwin would have made a grand professor in any institute of higher learning, and then I realized: That's exactly what he is. There are vintage cars in the entrance area, and even more impressive automobiles in the much larger grand hall, resplendent in Italian marble and ornate trim.

There are 250 automobiles in the Nethercutt collection, and it's no accident these folks routinely take Best in Show awards at Pebble Beach and elsewhere. The automobiles defy description; every car is visually arresting. Irwin says that with the exception of casting glass, molding new tires, and chrome plating, the Nethercutt does all its restorations on the premises.

THE SKINNY

What: The Nethercutt Museum and Collection, 15151 Bledsoe St., Sylmar, California, 91342, (818) 364-6464. Admission to both the museum and the tour are free. Open Tuesday through Saturday.

How to Get There: From the south, take either I-5 or I-210 to Polk Street, to Bradley, and then Bledsoe. From the north, take I-5 south. Sylmar is about 30 miles north of Los Angeles.

Best Kept Secret: Caruso's Italian Kitchen in Sylmar. It's only 2-1/2 miles from the Nethercutt. Try the pizza, the sausage and peppers, or anything else. It's awesome.

More Photos and Video: bit.ly/nethercutt-berk

More Info: bit.ly/nethercutt-cnet



Irwin explains all of this while holding up a large, poster-sized black-and-white photograph of a derelict Packard literally disintegrating in a barn (a true barn find). Then, with a flourish, he drops the photo to reveal a fully restored, pearlescent pink Packard parked before us. "This," he says, "is that car." Our group erupts in applause. This is grand entertainment, and Irwin is a spectacular speaker. Every car is operational, he tells us, and each is driven on public roads once a year. "We've never had an accident," Irwin explains, "but we've sure caused a few."

The brilliant vintage colors, mixed to the manufacturers' original specifications, go way beyond the staid black we normally associate with such vehicles. Wild metallics and opalescent hues were all the rage, formed by crushing abalone shells and more into the mixer. We tend to think all vintage cars were black because of Henry Ford ("any color you want as long as it's black") and the media of that era (black-and-white movies and photos). The Nethercutt shows that wasn't the case at all: Prior generations had an eye for flash.

The tour progresses to a stunning collection of vintage furniture, vintage hood ornaments, and vintage musical instruments, all restored by Irwin and his team. The instruments are displayed in yet another elegant hall, a reconstructed silent movie theatre. The centerpiece is a 5,000-pipe concert organ. Irwin explains how the organ provided sound effects and musical accompaniment in those early years. There's nothing in the world like being treated to and surrounded by music emanating from a magnificent and lovingly restored 100-year-old concert organ. "The old gal is feeling good today," Irwin intones as the building resonates and our tour concludes.

As you know from reading this column, I get to write about many amazing destinations. The Nethercutt Museum and Collection is one of the best, and Professor Irwin's explanations and delivery are flawless; he commands absolute attention. Every student would get an "A" in this course. — Joe Berk

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CALENDAR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Don't miss these upcoming events!

10/27 Visit Norcross, Georgia, for the 28th Annual Blue Moon Cycle Euro Bike Swap Meet on Saturday, Oct. 27. The swap meet is open to all parts, accessories and apparel for European motorcycles. Display your late model, used or classic bike for sale in the Consignment Corral for \$25 each. No fee for buyers or sellers, and free lunch for all. The swap meet runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, then come back and join in Sunday, Oct. 28, for the Blue Moon Cycle Vintage Ride. Join the Blue Moon staff and friends for a scenic ride through the Georgia countryside including a lunch stop and a special attraction. This ride is open to all motorcycles 1985 and older. Admission is free, and the ride leaves at 9 a.m. from Blue Moon Cycle. On the web at bluemooncycle.com, or call John Landstrom for more details at (770) 447-6945, ext. 20.

11/3 Head to Vicksburg, Mississippi, for the 2nd Annual Vicksburg Vintage Motorcycle Show. Entry is free and open to pre-1990 motorcycles, scooters, dirt bikes, etc. The show runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and more than 15 awards will be given out, including class awards, People's Choice and Best of Show. Enjoy live entertainment and downtown Vicksburg. The show will be held at the farmers market grass lot at 1055 Washington St. For more info, contact Roger Harris at roger.harris@ergon.com or (601) 831-2079 or search Vicksburg Vintage Motorcycle Show on Facebook.

11/4 Join the Southern California Norton Owners Club for "the

best ride by a dam site," the Hansen Dam Ride. Now in its 39th year, the ride is a great way to spend a day enjoying classic motorcycles. Recent years have seen more than 500 bikes of all makes show up, making it the largest classic motorcycle event of the year in Southern California. A 75-mile-plus route is mapped out for the day. Show up as early as 8 a.m. for coffee and donuts, and after the ride the grill will be fired up with lunch served. The ride departs at 10 a.m. sharp! On the web at socalnorton.com

12/31 The last ride of the year: Join the Southern California Norton Owners Club for the Run for the Roses up to Newcomb's Ranch. Ride departs at 10 a.m. sharp from Lucky Baldwins Trappiste located at 1770 East Colorado Blvd. in Pasadena, California. On the web at socalnorton.com

1/26 Mark your calendar early for the largest vintage motorcycle show in South Florida. Head to Dania Beach, just south of Ft. Lauderdale, for the 13th Annual Dania Beach Vintage Motorcycle Show, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 26. More than 400 classic bikes will be judged under the trees in Frost Park. Enjoy live music, vendors, a bike parts swap meet, food, motorcycle field games, roller derby girls, a vintage bicycle display and more. The event is free to the public, with a fee for entering bikes, and proceeds benefit K9s For Warriors, Southeastern Guide Dogs and the Dania Beach Lions Club. On the web at daniabeachvintagebikeshow.com

Nov. 1-4 — Lone Star Rally. Galveston Island, TX. lonestarrally.com

Nov. 8-11 — 18th Annual Rocky Point Rally. Puerto Peñasco, Sonora, Mexico. rockypointrally.com

Nov. 16-18 — International Motorcycle Show. Long Beach, CA. motorcycleshows.com

Nov. 25 — So-Cal Cycle Swap Meet. Long Beach, CA. socalcycleswapmeet.com

Nov. 30-Dec. 2 — International Motorcycle Show. New York, NY. motorcycleshows.com

Dec. 4 — 41st Annual Chicagoland Toys for Tots Motorcycle Parade. Chicago, IL. chicagolandtft.org

Dec. 30 — So-Cal Cycle Swap Meet. Long Beach, CA. socalcycleswapmeet.com

Jan. 4-6 — International Motorcycle Show. Dallas, TX. motorcycleshows.com

Jan. 25-27 — International Motorcycle Show. Cleveland, OH. motorcycleshows.com

Jan. 27 — So-Cal Cycle Swap Meet. Long Beach, CA. socalcycleswapmeet.com

Feb. 1-3 — International Motorcycle Show. Minneapolis, MN. motorcycleshows.com

Feb. 8-10 — International Motorcycle Show. Washington, DC. motorcycleshows.com

Feb. 15-17 — International Motorcycle Show. Chicago, IL. motorcycleshows.com

Feb. 24 — So-Cal Cycle Swap Meet. Long Beach, CA. socalcycleswapmeet.com



Take in the sights at the annual Dania Beach Vintage Motorcycle Show, Jan. 26, 2019.

Motorcycle Classics wants to know about classic motorcycle shows, swap meets, road runs and more. Send details of upcoming events at least three months in advance to lhall@motorcycleclassics.com



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But don't forget about the '70s! Many great and classic motorcycles were designed and built in the '70s, and *Motorcycle Classics* has put together a 100-page special edition featuring articles that explore the decade and what it brought to the motorcycle world. The Honda GL1000 Gold Wing, Triumph X75 Hurricane, BMW R90s, Suzuki GS1000, along with many others are all covered in this glossy-page, full-color guide.

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New Stuff for Old Bikes

From top-quality valve spring kits to waterproof saddlebags, here are six cool products every classic bike fan should know about.



R/D valve spring kits

Founded in 1981 by Donn Rickard and Jim Dour of Megacycle Cams, California-based R/D Valve Springs has valve spring kits for vintage British, Italian and Japanese motorcycles, and also supplies individual springs and valve guides, valve guide seals, plus shims, lash caps and buckets for overhead cam engines. R/D valve parts are designed, engineered and manufactured in-house using only the best high-quality materials including 6AL4V titanium, 4140 Cr Mo, AL Si bronze and 7075 T06 aluminum. Kits start at \$112. Honda CB350 twin beehive kit shown. More info: rdvalvespring.com



Fox Creek elkskin gloves

Fox Creek Leather's roots go back to the 1970s, when founder Paul Trachy started selling leather gear at swap meets and drag races. Since then the Virginia-based company's name has become synonymous with high-quality, made in America leather riding gear like these elkskin gauntlet gloves. Elkskin is well known for its superior abrasion resistance, and Fox Creek says they're the thickest and toughest motorcycle gloves they make. Available in XS to XXL sizes starting at \$82. More info: foxcreekleather.com



Schubert O1 helmet

Schubert has announced the new open-faced O1 "jet" helmet. Using Schubert's proprietary Direct Fiber Processing manufacturing technique to ensure superior impact absorption for enhanced safety, the wind tunnel-shaped shell provides a quiet, aerodynamic profile, while the ergonomically shaped and breathable seamless lining provides superior ventilation. Available in nine colors (Era Bronze shown) and three sizes. \$459 as shown. More info: schubert.com



Aerostich fleece pants

The touring specialists at Minnesota-based Aerostich know all about cold-weather riding, providing hard-core motorcycle tourers great winter gear like these fleece pants. Designed to be worn under a riding suit, they're perfect for when the temps fall or for cold fall and spring mornings. The left leg opens fully from the bottom to the waist while the right leg zipper opens up to about crotch level to make getting them on and off a breeze. Available in five sizes. \$127. More info: aerostich.com



Phil Little steering kit

Street trackers and dirt track racing are big at Minnesota-based Phil Little Racing, which recently announced the availability of its QuikTurn 27-degree Steering Kit. Designed for owners of 1988-2003 Evo Sportsters racing in the fast and fast-growing Hooligan flat track class, the kit reduces fork angle from the stock 30-degree rake to 27 degrees for quicker steering and allowing more counter-steering as the stock rake wants to self-center in corners and push. Fits inside steering head and works with stock steering yokes. \$545. More info: phillittleracing.com



Nelson-Rigg soft bags

California-based riding gear specialist Nelson-Rigg claim their Sierra Dry Saddlebags are 100 percent waterproof, a claim we can back up after a long ride in torrential rain. Our riding gear was soaked, but everything in our Sierra Dry Saddlebags was perfectly dry. Made to last with aircraft-grade mounting hardware, they feature removable stiffeners to hold the bags' shape when empty and zippered liners to make packing/unpacking a breeze. Each bag holds 27.5 liters. Lifetime warranty. Available in black or yellow/black. \$199.95. More info: nelsonrigg.com

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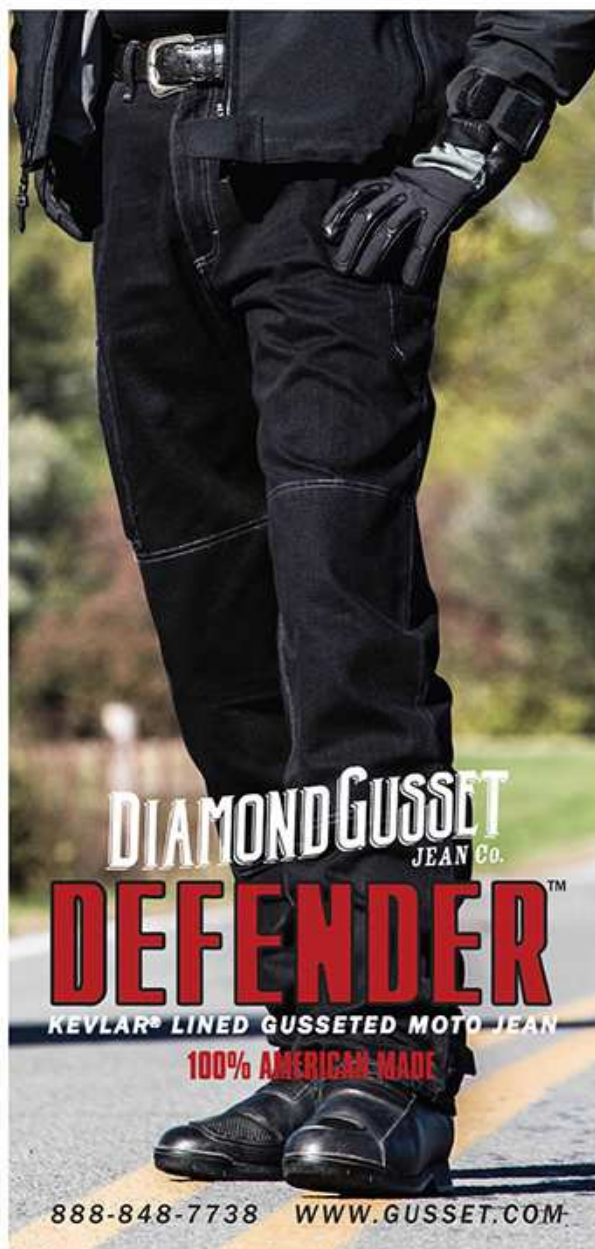
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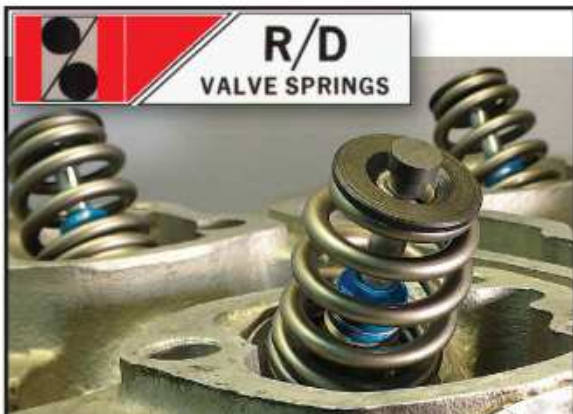
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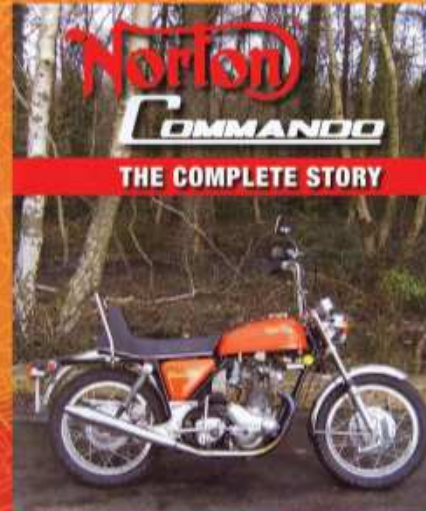
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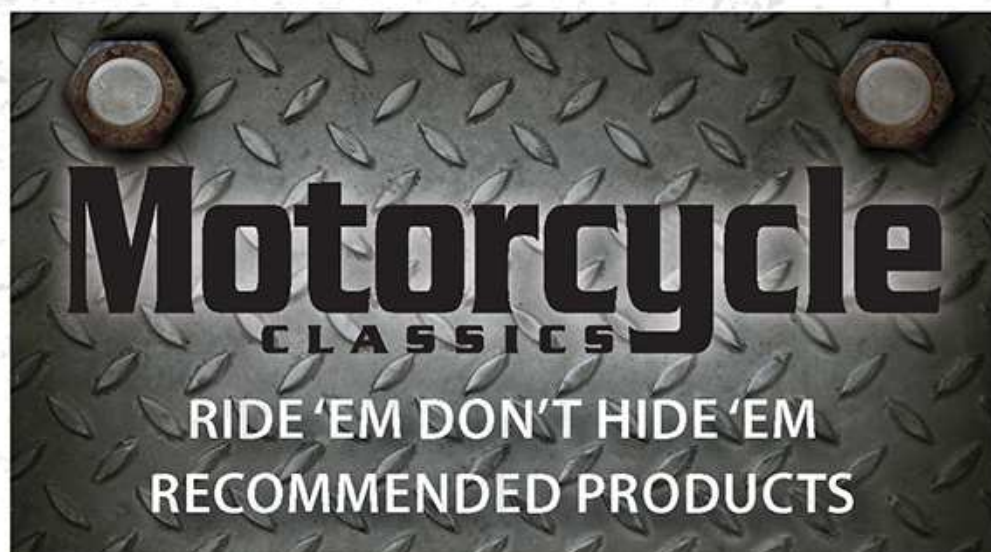
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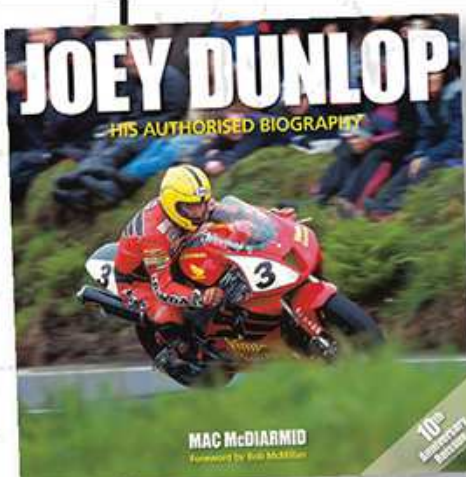
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JOEY DUNLOP

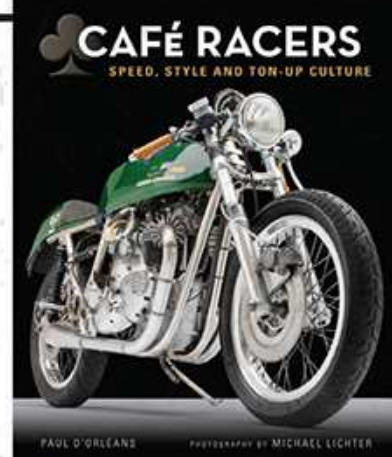
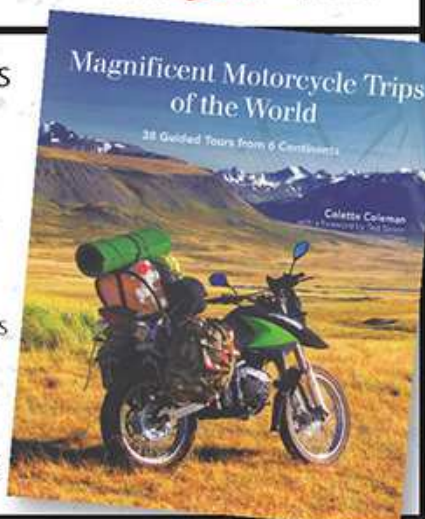
This illustrated official biography explores the life of the most successful racing motorcyclist in the 107-year history of the Isle of Man TT races. Joey Dunlop's achievements included three hat tricks at the Isle of Man TT races (1985, 1988, and 2000), where he won a record 26 races in total, as well as 24 wins in the Ulster Grand Prix and 13 in the North West 200 in his native Northern Ireland. For motorcycle fans, Joey Dunlop is still akin to royalty.

#7518 ~~\$44.95~~ \$39.95

MAGNIFICENT MOTORCYCLE TRIPS OF THE WORLD

Featuring 40 spectacular routes from the snowy passes of Patagonia to Australia's Red Centre, this book is the perfect inspiration for your next big motorcycling adventure. Full of stunning photography and route maps showing points of interest along the way, the guide focuses on journeys that are accessible to everyone.

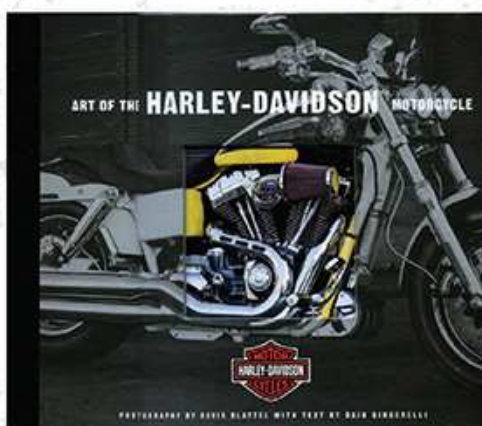
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CAFÉ RACERS: SPEED, STYLE AND TON-UP CULTURE

The rebellious rock'n'roll counterculture is what first inspired these bikes, with their owners often racing down public roads in excess of 100 miles per hour ("ton up," in British slang). Chronologically illustrated with fascinating historical photography, *Café Racers* travels through the eras of these nimble, lean, light, and head-turning machines. This stunning hardcover book features 224 pages filled with the story of these wonderful machines.

#7254 ~~\$50.00~~ \$42.50



ART OF THE HARLEY-DAVIDSON MOTORCYCLE

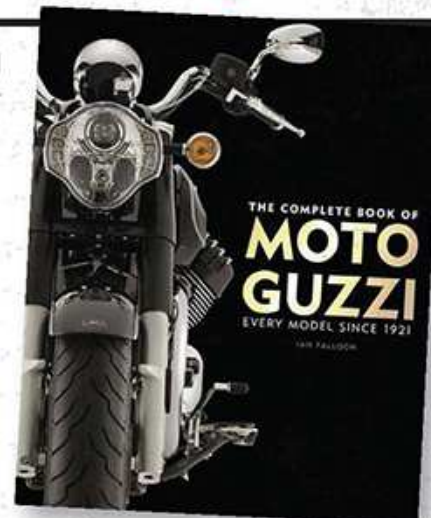
Art of the Harley-Davidson Motorcycle pulls together the best of David Blattell's Harley-Davidson portraiture--over 100 stunning machines--resulting in a breathtaking review of Harley-Davidson's greatest hits from the early 1900s to today. Harley-Davidson expert Dain Gingerelli puts each machine in historical and technical context with informed profiles.

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THE COMPLETE BOOK OF MOTO GUZZI

The oldest European motorcycle manufacturer in continuous production, Italy's Moto Guzzi has built some of the most iconic motorcycles ever produced. Established in 1921, the company is one of the most traditional motorcycle makers and also one of the most innovative. For the first time ever, *The Complete Book of Moto Guzzi: Every Model Since 1921* collects all of these iconic motorcycles in encyclopedia form, written by widely respected Moto Guzzi expert Ian Falloon.

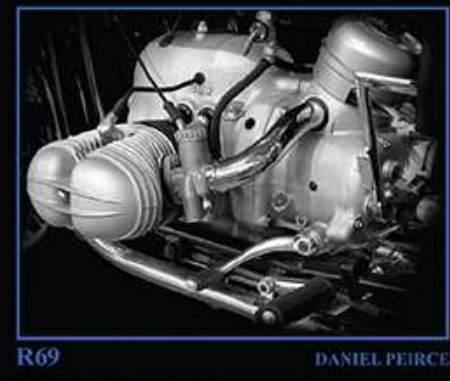
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CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES

Written by noted motorcycle author Patrick Hahn, *Classic Motorcycles* presents the history of motorcycling as told through the most significant, iconic, classic motorcycles of all time, with both period photography and modern portrait photography. You'll drool over the 1933 Matchless Silver Hawk, and you'll want to tear out the page displaying the 1956

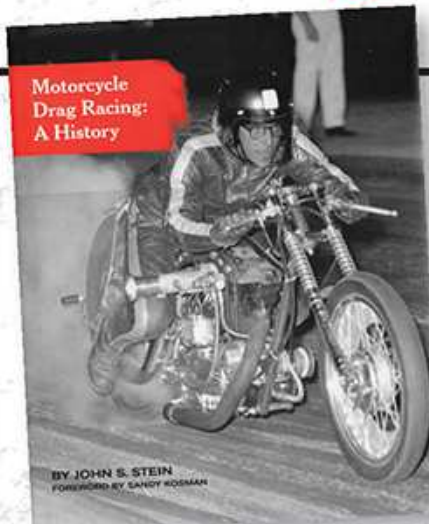
Triumph Thunderbird and frame it. Prepare to be in awe of the undeniable classic motorcycles in this collection.

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Ideal for any cleaning needs, our industrial-strength shop towels are absorbent and long-lasting. Made from 100 percent cotton, the 14-inch-long-by-14-inch-wide towels are great for use in the garage or on the job for mechanics, autoworkers, or anyone working in an industry where your hands proudly get dirty.

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Motorcycle Drag Racing: A History

MOTORCYCLE DRAG RACING: A HISTORY

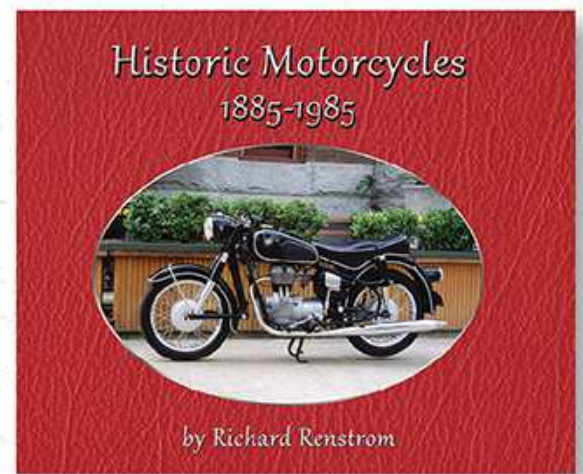
At 244 pages and nearly 3 pounds, this hardcover book has much to explore. While much of the change in organized motorcycle drag racing has involved the machinery – and the book discusses it in great detail – it is the people that make the sport so fascinating. And in the book, more than 500 of them are discussed.

#6118 ~~\$40.00~~ \$34.99

HISTORIC MOTORCYCLES 1885–1985

Historic Motorcycles 1885–1985 provides the reader with stunning full-color photographs of more than 100 of the world's most beautiful and rare motorcycles. Richard Renstrom, an author of five books and an accomplished photographer, spent more than 50 years accumulating this library of photos of vintage motorcycles from 12 countries (including the United States, England, France, Germany, and Japan). Each photograph is accompanied by a detailed historical essay documenting the origin of each motorcycle as well as the technical specifications that make each machine a true original.

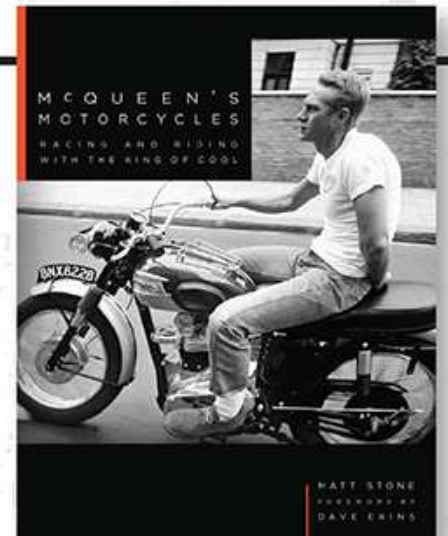
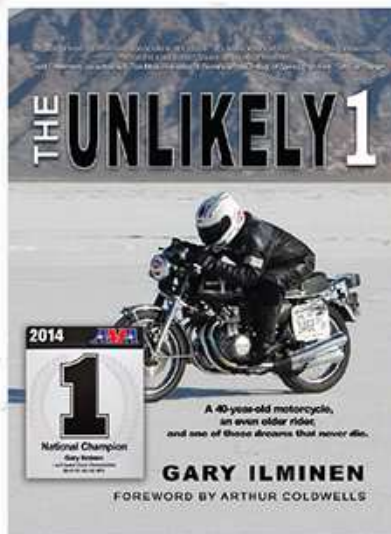
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THE UNLIKELY 1

As a teenager, Gary Ilminen read about the motorcycle land speed record-setters that made history on the vast salt flats of Bonneville. After almost four decades came the chance to compete at Bonneville in 2009; three more trips there ensued and in 2014, the dream of setting a national speed record came true!

#8715 ~~\$19.79~~ \$17.99



MCQUEEN'S MOTORCYCLES

Even 30 years after his death, Steve McQueen remains a cultural icon. This book focuses on the bikes that the King of Cool raced and collected. From the first Harley McQueen bought when he was an acting student in New York to the Triumph "desert sleds" and Huskys he desert raced all over California, Mexico, and Nevada. *McQueen's Motorcycles* reveals these highly sought-after machines in gorgeous photography and full historical context.

#8184 ~~\$35.00~~ \$29.99

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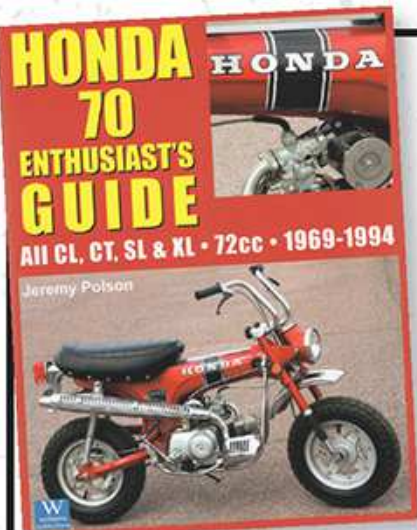


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MOTORCYCLE CLASSICS T-SHIRT

Newly designed and exclusively available through *Motorcycle Classics*, this charcoal T-shirt is soft-hand printed in white lettering with the magazine's logo and slogan, "Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em," emblazoned across the chest. Available in unisex sizes S-2XL.

#8214-8217 S-XL ~~\$15.00~~ \$13.00
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HONDA 70 ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE

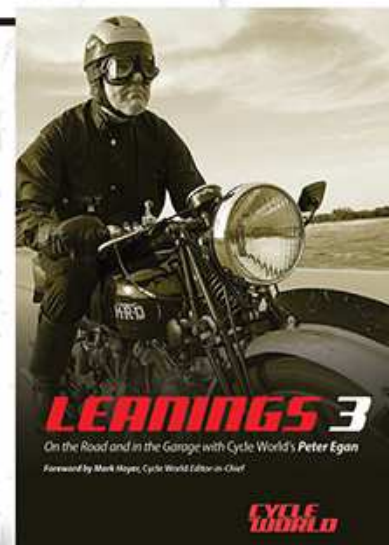
Author of *Honda Mini Trail: Enthusiast's Guide*, Jeremy Polson has put together another vintage Honda guide. It covers the third-best-selling Honda in American Honda history, the long-running Mini Trail CT-70, along with the CL, SL, and XL 72cc motorcycles manufactured from 1969 to 1994. In addition to the hard facts, this book is filled with many rare photos that track the evolution of Honda's 72cc motorcycles and unravels their mystery.

#8777 ~~\$29.95~~ \$27.95

CLASSIC BRITISH MOTORCYCLES

In the modern era, mass-produced motorcycles tend to be Japanese or Italian, with the "big four" Asian manufacturers dominating the market. However, until the 1950s, and even into the '60s, British makers such as Norton and Vincent ruled the roost. These legendary companies, and many smaller British firms, are motorcycling's founding companies. Superbly illustrated with more than 150 color pictures, many previously unpublished, this book is a captivating and highly informative account of the men, machines, race meetings, and world events that shaped the development of the motorcycle from its bicycle origins.

#7758 ~~\$32.00~~ \$29.99



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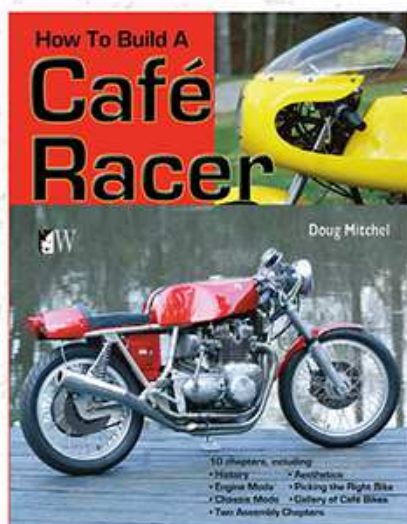
Leanings 3 contains stories and observations from one of America's best motorcycle journalists. Peter Egan's writing invites you to pull up a chair, pour a little scotch, and relax while he shares with you his tales from the road, his motorcycling philosophy, and his keen observations about the two-wheeled life. This is an unforgettable collection of the works of a master writer whose simple adventures of life remind us all why we love to ride.

#7446 ~~\$28.00~~ \$23.99

HOW TO BUILD A CAFÉ RACER

The book starts with chapters on planning and choosing an appropriate bike, followed by chapters that detail the modifications that will likely be embraced by anyone converting a stocker to a rocker. From shocks and tires to engine modifications, Doug Mitchell's book lays out each type of modification and how it's best carried through. The center of the book holds a gallery of finished bikes. The final chapters include two start-to-finish Café builds.

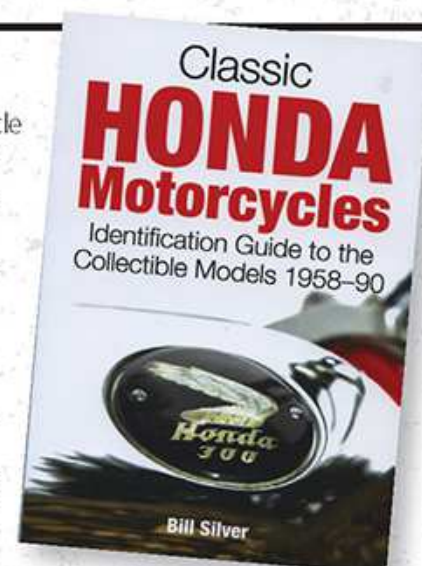
#6684 ~~\$27.95~~ \$23.95



CLASSIC HONDA MOTORCYCLES

Honda made its mark on the motorcycle world with small, affordable bikes, and grew well beyond that to create some of the most important performance machines ever built. Today, these bikes are increasingly coveted by collectors and enthusiasts. This guide to the collectible Hondas gives prospective buyers a leg up on the current market for groundbreaking classics.

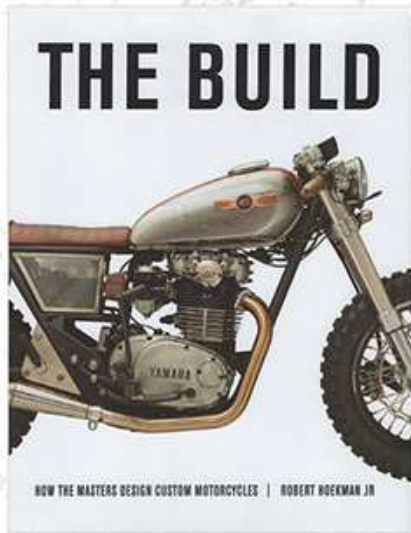
#6428 ~~\$40.00~~ \$34.00



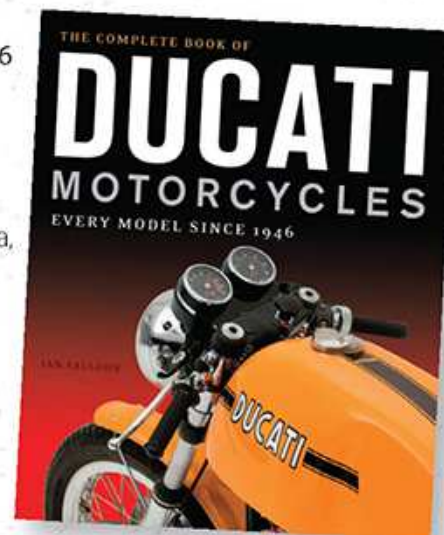
THE BUILD: HOW THE MASTERS DESIGN CUSTOM MOTORCYCLES

In *The Build*, Robert Hoekman Jr. compiles insights from today's best builders to help you plot out your own beautiful beast. This book is as much a 192-page motorcycle art book as it is a blueprint to building the perfect custom bike. The book is the bible of custom motorcycle design, starting with an explanation of all the different bike styles, and then moving into a concise, easy-to-read guide that takes you from finding a donor bike to figuring out how to alter the lines to your liking. The book also covers selecting and building parts, painting and finishing, and what kind of performance modifications might be appropriate.

#8053 ~~\$45.00~~ \$38.99



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF DUCATI MOTORCYCLES: EVERY MODEL SINCE 1946
The *Complete Book of Ducati Motorcycles* traces the stunning chronology of the motorcycles dreamed up by Ducati, from the 1940s to the present day. Laid out for the first time in the form of an encyclopedia, with gorgeous photography and insights from Ducati expert Ian Falloon, this book offers motorcycle enthusiasts a closer look at the craftsmanship, power, and beauty of these extraordinary motorcycles. The book features all of the motorcycles from Ducati's storied history, including the groundbreaking Desmodromic 750 Super Sport, the Mike Hailwood Replica, the Superbike-dominating 916, and the epic Panigale.



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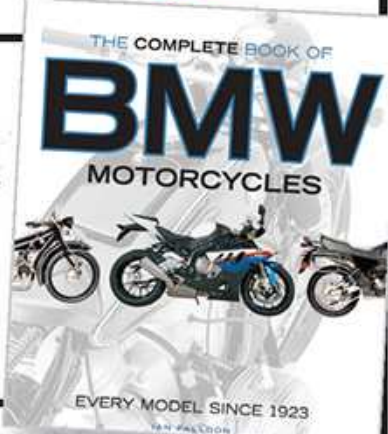
BMW CAFÉ RACERS

There have been many books published about BMW motorcycles, but until now none has covered the evolution of the BMW sport bike to the BMW café racer. A marque not commonly associated with the café racer scene, the growing trend of custom BMW café conversions is illustrated in detail with stunning images of sporting, racing, and café BMWs. From Airheads to Oilheads, modified singles to parallel twins, Fours and Concept 6s, see the café side of BMW.

#6482 ~~\$39.95~~ \$36.95

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF BMW MOTORCYCLES
The *Complete Book of BMW Motorcycles* is a thorough year-by-year guide to every production machine ever built by Germany's leading motorcycle manufacturer. Get the story behind bikes such as the pre-World War II R5, the military R12, and the K1 "flying brick." This guide captures nearly a century of motorcycling excellence with a combination of historic and contemporary photos.

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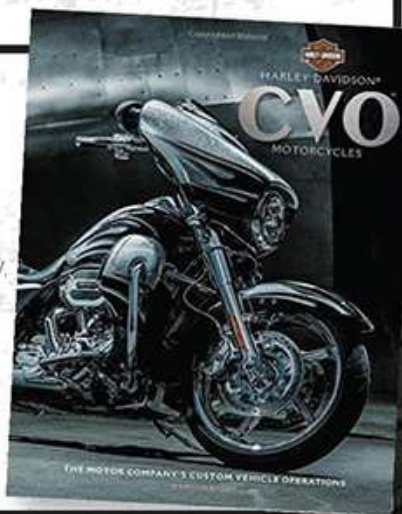
Enjoy a delicious cup of coffee or hot chocolate with your very own *Motorcycle Classics* mug. This smooth, molded ceramic mug has an easy comfort grip handle that makes it perfect for sipping coffee or drinking hot tea on a cold winter morning. What a perfect way to show off your favorite magazine to the world!

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HARLEY-DAVIDSON CVO MOTORCYCLES

Harley-Davidson Custom Vehicle Operations (CVO) motorcycles are the pinnacle of the Motor Company's customization: custom-shop details that push the boundaries of style and performance with high-impact paint, killer wheels, big engines, and exclusive technology. Designed in-house since 1999 at Harley-Davidson's world-class Willie G. Product Development Center, built by the factory, and available through Harley-Davidson's dealer network, these machines set themselves apart from the pack.

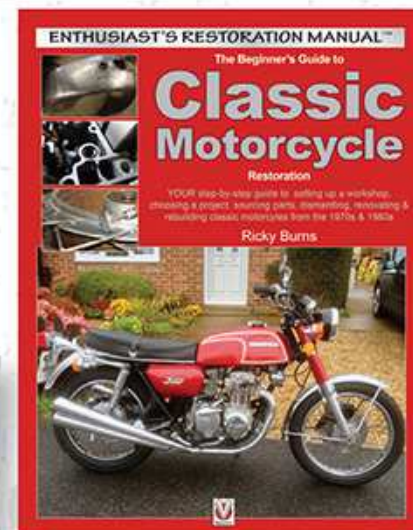
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CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE RESTORATION

The 1970s and 1980s were wonderful eras for the motorcycle, with their assortment of crazy two-strokes, and the first multi-cylinder Superbikes coming thick and fast from Japan. It was a time of fast-paced engineering advances, and a time in motorcycle history that is unlikely ever to be repeated. Those over-budget motorcycles that we longed for then are now available well within budget ... and just waiting to be restored. Packed full of photographs, and with detailed instructions, this book is the perfect companion for any classic motorcycle restorer.

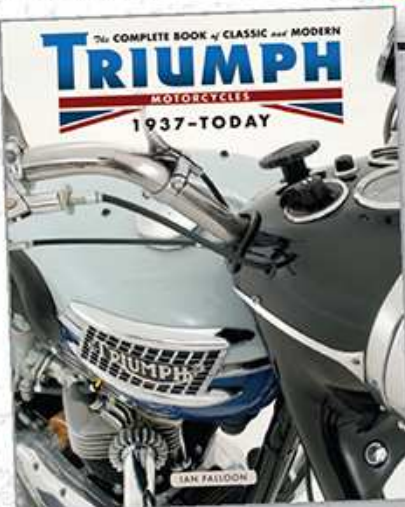
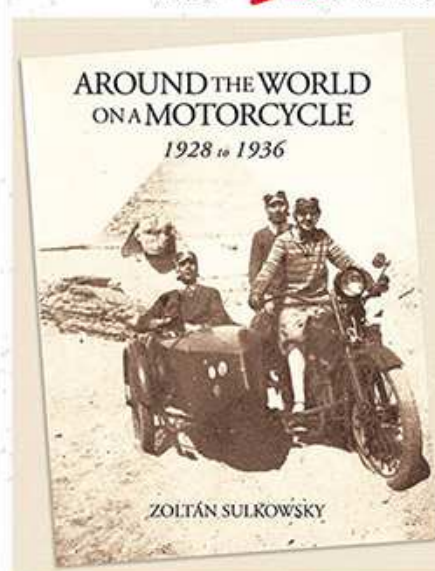
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AROUND THE WORLD ON A MOTORCYCLE

The year was 1928 when two young Hungarians decided to travel around the world on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle with sidecar. This account gives a very clear-eyed view of the world in the 1930s—the two experienced the riches of sultans, witnessed primitive cultures in remote villages, traveled through wilderness, and traversed roads of all descriptions. This intelligent book offers a unique world view between the World Wars, flavored by the great diversity of cultures and the wide variety of human life.

#8347 ~~\$24.95~~ \$21.95



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF CLASSIC AND MODERN TRIUMPH MOTORCYCLES

Written by respected Triumph expert Ian Falloon, this guide collects all of the motorcycles from this iconic brand in a single volume. All of the major and minor models are covered, with an emphasis on the most exemplary, era-defining motorcycles, such as the Thunderbird, Tiger, Trophy, Bonneville, and new machines such as the Speed Triple, Thruxton, and Daytona 675. This is a book no Triumph fan will want to be without!

#7667 ~~\$50.00~~ \$42.50

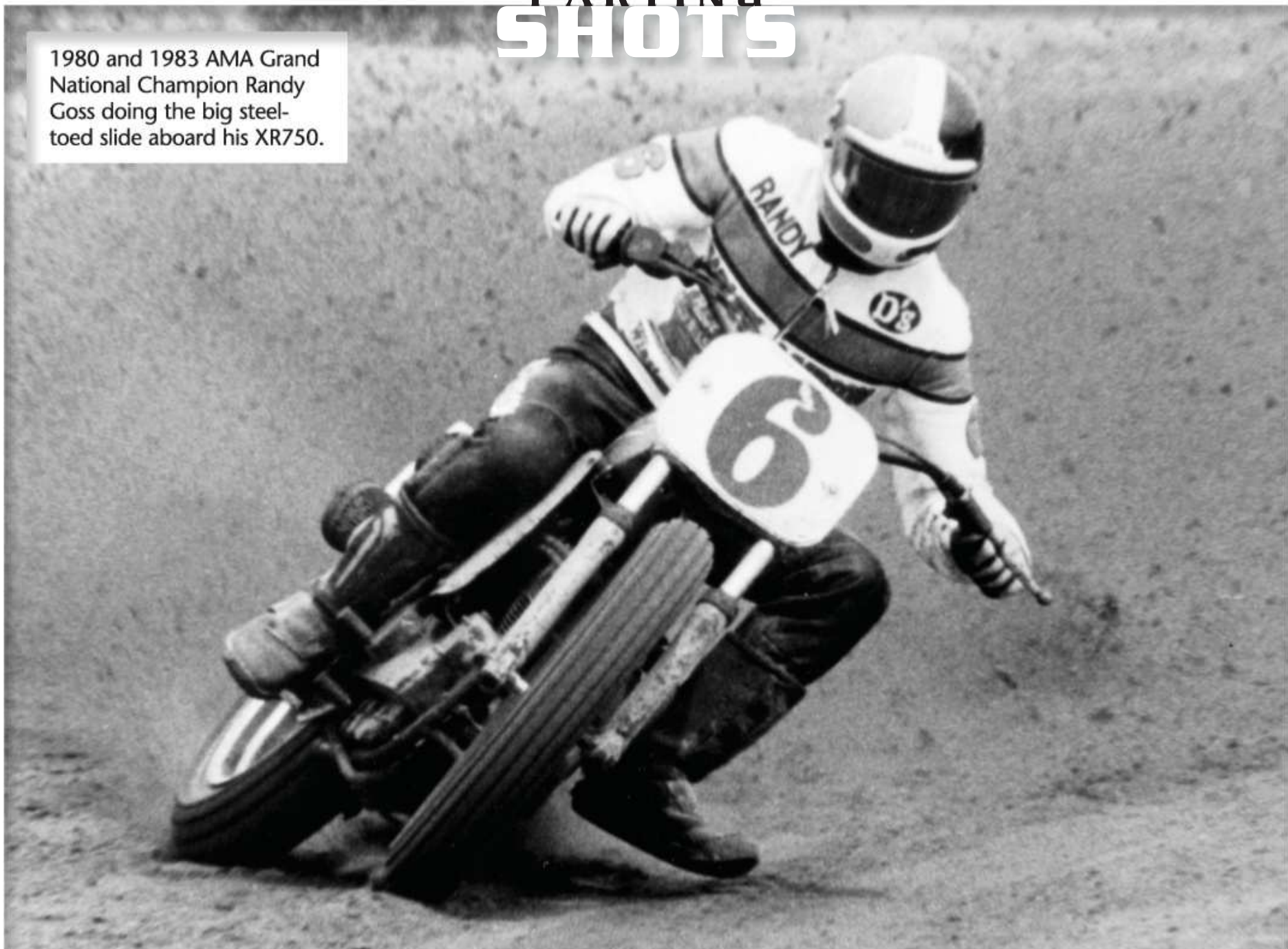
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1980 and 1983 AMA Grand National Champion Randy Goss doing the big steel-toed slide aboard his XR750.



Steel shoes steal the show

Before Maldwyn Jones joined the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Hall of Fame in 1998, he already had firmly planted one foot into history during a flat track race in 1910. That was the year he's credited with being the first motorcycle racer to wear a steel shoe for flat track racing.

According to an article penned by Jerry Smith for the April 1983 issue of *Cycle Guide*, Jones fashioned and fastened a special steel plate to the sole of his left boot in an attempt to minimize wear to his boot. Turns out that Jones and other racers often dabbed their left feet as gently as possible above the track's surface while cornering to prevent a fall should the bike's tires lose traction. If the bike began to slip, the racer would fully extend that dangling left foot onto the ground. It's what Jones termed the "big slide." As you can imagine, leather soles wore out quickly using that technique, so Jones reasoned that a piece of steel under the sole might help extend boot life, in turn minimizing his racing expenses.

His idea caught on, but little progress was made concerning steel shoe design and application until the 1930s, when the personable and dynamic speedway racer Lloyd "Sprouts" Elder returned to America after spending a few years competing in England where speedway racing was popular. Speedway racers there had perfected the art of the three-point slide — two wheels and one foot — and Elder (who, incidentally, also was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1998) demonstrated the technique to American flat trackers. The steel shoe now had a

reason to exist on every flat track racer's left foot, prompting some of the more industrious competitors to dabble in creating their own versions of footwear for the track.

But it wasn't until the early 1950s that one particular racer stepped forward to provide suitable steel shoes for everybody. That was Ken Maely, a young man with blacksmithing skills that enabled him to fashion shoes for AMA pros, among them Indian-mounted Bobby Hill, who wore his Maeley steel shoe when he won the AMA Grand National Championship in 1952. Hill's feat (or, dare I say, foot?) began a string of Maely steel-shoe-shod AMA champions for years to come. Carroll Resweber wore a Maely shoe. So did "Black" Bart Markel and Kenny Roberts, and Jay Springsteen and Scott Parker, and the list goes on.

Maely based his steel shoes on a section of 0.060-inch-thick annealed steel that he custom fit to each racer's boot. Using an acetylene torch, he then patiently applied a special hard-face surface to the bottom sole. That hard surface, which also could be specifically contoured for each particular type of racing application (short track, half-mile, mile and speedway) became Maely's trademark, and the secret to his success. Maely went on to design and sell speedway bikes of his own design, but he's best remembered for his steel shoes. It's ironic, perhaps even appropriate, that Maely followed closely in Jones' and Elder's footsteps; he was inducted into the AMA Hall of Fame the following year, 1999. — *Dain Gingerelli*

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